INTEREST DEPOSED,

AND

TRUTH RESTORED.

OR,

A Word in Season, delivered in Two SERMONS:

The First at St. *MARYES* in *OXFORD*, on the 24th of *July*, 1659. being the time of the *Assizes*: as also of the *Fears* and *Groans* of the Nation in the threatned, and expected *Ruin* of the *Laws*, *Ministery*, and *Universityes*.

The other Preached lately before the Honourable Societie of *LINCOLNS-INN*.

BY

ROBERT SOUTH, Mr. of Arts, and Student of *CHRIST-CHURCH*.

OXFORD,

Printed by *A. L.* for *Tho. Robinson*, 1660.

2/6

(12), 20, (1), 24 pp.

XUM

TO THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFULL

EDWARD ATKINS,

Serjeant at Law, and formerly one of the Justices of the *COMMON-PLEAS.*

Honoured Sir,

THough at first it was free, and in my choice, whether or no I should publish these Discourses, yet the Publication being once Resolved, the Dedication was not so indifferent; the Nature of the Subject, no less than the Obligations of the Author, styling them in a peculiar manner Yours: For since their drift is to carry the most Endangered, and Endangering Truth, above the Safest, when sinfull, Interest; as a Practice upon grounds of Reason the most Generous, and of Christianity the most Religious; to whom rather should this Assertion repaire as to a Patron, than to Him whom it has for an Instance? Who in a case of eminent Competition choose Duty before Interest, and when the Judge grew inconsistent with the Justice, preferred rather to be *Constant* to sure Principles, than to an Unconstant Government: And to retreat to an Innocent, and Honourable Privacy, than to sit and *Act inquity by a Law*; and make

your Age and Conſcience, (the one Venerable, the other Sacred) Drudges to the Tyranny of Fanatick, Perjured Uſurpers. The next attempt of this Diſcourſe, is a Defence of the Miniſtery, and that at ſuch a time when none owned them upon the Bench (for then you had quitted it) but when on the contrary we lived to hear One in the very face of the Univerſity, as it were in defiance of us and our Profeſſion, openly in his Charge defend the Quakers and Fanaticks, perſons not fit to be nam'd in ſuch Courts, but in an Indictment. But, Sir, in the Inſtructions I here preſumed to give to others, concerning what they ſhould doe, you may take a Narrative of what you have done: what reſpected their Actions as a Rule or Admonition, applyed to yours is onely a Rehearſall. Whoſe Zeal in aſſerting the Miniſteriall Cauſe is ſo generally known, ſo gratefully acknowledged, that I dare affirme, that in what I deliver, you read the Words indeed of One, but the Thanks of All. VVhich affectionate Concernment of yours for them, ſeems to argue a Spirituall ſence, and Experimentall Taſt of their VVorks, and that you have reaped as much from their Labours, as others have done from their Lands: For to me it ſeemed alwaies ſtrange, and next to Impoſſible, that a man converted by the Word Preached, ſhould ever hate and perſecute a Preacher. And ſince you have ſeverall times in diſcourſe declared your ſelf for that Government in the Church, that is founded upon Scripture, Reaſon, Apoſtolicall Practice and Antiquity, and (we are ſure) the only one that can conſiſt with the Preſent Government of State, I thought the latter Diſcourſe alſo might fitly addreſſe it ſelfe to you, in the which you may read your Judgement, as in the other your Practice. And now ſince it has pleaſed Providence, at length to turn our Captivity,

and

and anſwer perſecuted Patience with the unexpected returns of Settlement; to remove our Rulers, and reſtore our Ruler; and not onely to make our *Exactors righteouſneſſe*, but, what is better, to give us Righteouſneſſe inſtead of Exaction, and hopes of Religion to a Church worried with Reformation; I believe upon due and impartiall Reflexion on what is Paſt, you now find no cauſe to Repent, that you never dipt your hands in the Bloody *High Courts of Juſtice*, properly ſo called onely by Antiphraſis; nor ever proſtituted the Scarlet Robe to thoſe Employments, in which you muſt have worne the Colour of your Sinne in the Badge of your Office. But notwithſtanding all the Enticements of a Proſperous Villany, abhorred the Purchaſe, when the Price was Blood. So that now being priviledged by an happy Unconcernment in thoſe Legall Murders, you may take a ſweeter reliſh of your own Innocence, by beholding the miſery of others Guilt, who being Guilty before God, and infamous before men, Obnoxious to Both, begin to find the firſt fruit of their ſinne in the Univerſal ſcorn of all, their apparent Danger, and unlikely Remedy: which beginnings being at length conſummated by the hand of Juſtice, the cry of Blood and Sacriledge will ceaſe, mens doubts will be Satisfied, and Providence Abſolved.

And thus, Sir, having preſumed to honour my firſt Eſſayes in Divinity, by prefixing to them a Name, to which Divines are ſo much obliged. I ſhould here in the cloſe of this Addreſſe, contribute a Wiſh at leaſt to your Happyneſſe: But ſince we deſire it not yet in another VVorld, and your Enjoyments in this (according to the Standard of a Chriſtian deſire) are ſo compleat, that they require no Addition, I ſhall turn my VViſhes into Gratulations, and congratulating their Fulneſſe, onely wiſh their Continuance.

tinuance: Praying, that you may ſtill poſſeſſe, what you poſſeſſe; and Doe what you Doe; that is, reflect upon a clear, unblotted, acquitting Conſcience, and feed upon the ineffable Comforts of the Memoriall of a Conquered Temptation; without the danger of returning to the Try-all. And this (Sir) I account the greateſt Felicity that you can enjoy, and therefore the greateſt that he can deſire, who is

Yours in all Obſervance,

Ch. Ch. the 25th. of *May*, 1660.

RO. SOUTH.

A Preface to the Reader.

THat being conſcious to my ſelf of having in Diſcourſe ſo often condemned the Scribling of the preſent Age, I ſhould yet now own it by my Practiſe; eſpecially in that ſort of Writing in which ſeverall have gone before me, whom it is no glory to come behind, I find a Neceſſity of beſpeaking the Readers acceptance with Excuſe, which yet I truſt I ſhall not manage ſo, as to make it onely matter for another, but preſent him with Reaſon, as well as Apology. And firſt for the Publication of theſe two Diſcourſes, the one Preached in the time of our Feares, the other of our Hopes, and now both comming forth in the beginning of our Fruition, I ſhall not plead their having paſſed the Teſt and Approbation of two of the moſt Judicious and Learned Auditories in the Nation, as ſuppoſing that was rather for the ſeaſonableneſſe of the Truth, than any Elegance of the Compoſure, and more for the Venture than the Performance: Yet from whatſoever cauſe it came, I ſhall not vouch it as a reaſon of the Publication, ſince the ſame perſons may applaud the ſame thing from the Pulpit, that they ſhall afterwards hiſſe coming from the Preſſe; as could be eaſily inſtanced in the Forlorne Works of ſome Vnfortunate Divines: But much leſſe was it the inſolent, imprudent itch of appearing in Publick, that induced me to this, as being confident that theſe Diſcourſes had more Hearers than they are like to finde Readers; ſo that my preſent attempt may be rather termed an Edition than a Publication. But leaſt of all ſhall I plead the importunity of Freinds, that ſtale pretence for publiſhing ſo many ſcribles; ſuch as being by much importunity brought to the Preſs, need a greater to bring them

them to perusall. But because a sordid, complying Spirit has been often charged upon the University, and (we must confesse) a spice of it has appeared in many amongst us, who have fouled, as well as disturbed these Fountains; I thought good to let our Detractors understand, that in the very depth of Sectarian Barbarisme, when the professed Enemies of the Church were the only Favourites of the State, and the very Pillars of it, the Vniversities and Ministers were falling, there has been some, who durst assert a Truth, though to the visible danger of their present Enjoyments, and the utter extinction of their future Hopes; and for so desperate a service the most inconsiderable person was the fittest, whose successe would have equally been an advantage, and whose ruin no losse. Nor can I deny but that I was desirous to clear my self from the undeserved surwises, that some (whose good esteem I have cause to value) have had of me; as if the injurious favours of some had not onely courted, but wonne me to a servile compliance, which I alwaies abhorred: But such was my fate, that some while they were in Power injured me by Persecution, when Declining, by their Favour. The Vindication also of some things here delivered was no small inducement to a Publication: For notwithstanding the forementioned acceptance these Discourses found, yet the former was attached by some severe Reprehenders, who according to the Canting Dialect of Wallingford-*house (which forty years ago would not have been understood, neither will it forty years hence) charged it as full of much* Wrath *and* Darknesse; *but it seemes it was such darknesse as the tyrannizing Egyptians began to* feele; *And I am sure no more Wrath then was deserved, and therefore very well bestowed. However, Providence has encouraged it to see the Light, while some of its Reprehenders sit in Darknesse. Yet since by Warrant from the Spirit it self,* we may be Angry, and sinne not, *the sharpnesse of a Reprehension is*

to

to be aſcribed to the Nature of the thing that merits, not to the Temper of him that delivers it. And ſince it has pleaſed God to unſhackle men from Engagements, Viſitations, and the Awe of Uſurpers, it is not to be expected, that Perjury, Blood, and Sacriledge, can be any longer Goſpellized into Acts of Piety, or high ſtrains of Evangelicall Perfection, becauſe indeed they goe much beyond the Command. Yet that Perſon, the late Oppreſſor of this Nation, and the known Father of Enthuſiaſts, in whom thoſe three Perfections eminently concurred, and who, we confeſſe is glanced upon in what follows, even him I have heard commended, as one, who notwithſtanding thoſe forementioned Infirmities (ſo called I conceive, becauſe they were the matter of his dayly Temptations) yet as to the main was truly pious, and to uſe his Encomiaſts very expreſſion, had great Communion with God. *I ſuppoſe in the ſame ſence, that the Faithful, Innocent, and Devout, hold Communion with the Devill. Wherefore if by Wrath was meant a Free (though at that time Dangerous) Animadverſion upon ſuch Spots of Chriſtianity, We own the Charge, and readily confeſſe, that the enſuing Diſcourſe was not Calculated for the ſoothing of Galled Conſciences, but really intended to Gall them more; and profeſſedly deſigned to reprove Avarice, Oppreſſion, Pious Fraudes, Blaſphemies, and Perjuries, waies not heretofore known of* holding Communion with God. *And as for Perſonall Reflexions, I know none ſuch ſpoken, but made ſuch by being Applyed: And if ſome proceeded to Application before I did, and from their Conſciouſneſſe inferred their Concernment, the Over-ruling ſentence of a Guilty Conſcience placing them under the Dint of any of theſe Reproofs, I am not he that either can, or would Abſolve them: For, as I have often ſaid, either they are not Guilty, and ſo they are not concerned in them, or Guilty, and ſo they deſerve them. But whereas it has been further objected, that*

I propoſed many doubts, which I left unanſwered; I am ſorry, that it was a fault, to think ſo honourably of my Auditory, as to eſteem it Needleſſe : *But it is not in my power to inform ſome mens Ignorance, nor my deſire to gratifie their Humour : And whether this Plea proceeds from a tender Conſcience, or a tender head, I am not much concerned, but acquieſce fully in this, that for the Objections, thoſe that were Learned, could hear and anſwer them; thoſe that were not, could not apprehend them, both therefore equally without danger. And whereas I do not now at leaſt in the Printing them, adde their Solutions; I anſwer, that in regard I profeſſe to publiſh the Sermon I then Preached, I ſhould not verify my Word, ſhould I by ſuch Additions make it Another. Having given an account of my deſign in the former Diſcourſe, and wiped off the Cenſures that for ſome time have ſtuck upon it, I ſhall endeavour to prepare the Reader for a fair underſtanding of the Second, which being Preached before many of the moſt conſiderable Members of the Houſe of Commons, had an Auditory ſuitable to its Deſign. For in as much as an Eraſtian Antiminiſteriall Spirit has for many years acted moſt of the Nation, who would command the Service, without ſubmitting to the Diſcipline of the Miniſters; And ſince Arguments from Piety or Scripture work little upon moſt of them, I thought it the beſt ſervice that could be done to the Eccleſiaſticall Cauſe, to make it appear that even a Politick conſideration would perſwade that, which was commanded upon a Spiritual : By ſhewing how Religion is that alone that holds together the whole frame of Government; it being upheld it ſelf by the Encouragement, and Honour of the Clergy. So that whereas I enforce it chiefly by Arguments drawn from Civill Concernments, I would have none offended, ſince my intent is limited here, only to this reſpect, it being an Argument* ad hominem; *not the onely One that the the Subject would afford, but that which was the moſt*

moſt likely to reach the Temper of the Times. And if I infer the neceſſity of Religion, and an Honourable Clergy from the Exigence of the Civil Intereſt, I ſuppoſe the neceſſity of it from Gods Command, and from the ſalvation of mens ſoules, is unqueſtionable: Wherefore I ſhall take the boldneſſe to entreat thoſe who ſhall think it worthy their Reading, before they Cenſure, to vouchſafe it at leaſt an attentive peruſal, in as much as it preſents to them ſome Truths, I think not often obſerved, I am ſure, not uſually delivered. For my own part, I cannot conceive how Religion can ſtand without a Miniſtery, nor the Miniſtery without its two Eſſential Props, Juriſdiction and Reſpect. It is the old, ſly, and undermining Plea, that Miniſters ought only to procure reſpect by their Learning, and laborious, Upright life; other advantages belong not to them. But to anſwer this; beſides, that late Experience proves, that the moſt Pious, and the moſt Learned, have been the moſt perſecuted and contemned, it is irrationall to think, that men ever yet made their Duty the meaſure of their Practice. And howſoever all ought, yet there are but very few who reverence Miniſters for thoſe Qualifications; but ſtill thoſe that do not, muſt be governed, or the Church ruined: therefore the Aſſiſtance of Secular ſupports muſt be taken in. Moſt therefore will confeſs Church Government Neceſſary, though they deny that Neceſſity to any determinate kind. But ſince Church Government in Generall ſequeſtred from its ſeverall kinds, is a meer Idea, I am apt to think that the Determination of it was commanded together with the thing it ſelf. And ſince only Particular, not Univerſal Natures fall under Practice, in as much as the Apoſtles did actually Govern the Church, it muſt needs be, that it was by a certain determinate kind of Government: And then conſidering the Infallible Apoſtolick Spirit by which they were acted, I conceive their Practice and Example was a Virtual Command: eſpecially when the reaſon and grounds

grounds of it continue ſtill the ſame. What that Practice was, though there are many not obſcure Traces of it in Scripture, yet I deſire to gather it from the general Practiſe of the Church ſucceſſively continued from their times: the moſt rationall Guide where the Scripture is ſilent, and the beſt Comment where it is Obſcure. And upon this Rule and Ground, I hold it more reaſonable to Erre, than upon Fanatick Principles to Stumble upon the Truth. Having thus ſhown my intent in theſe Sermons, and alſo the Rule, to the guidance of which I intend to reſign my ſelf, in whatſoever God ſhall hereafter call me either to Speak or Act as a Miniſter, I ſhall venture theſe Meditations into the World. What reception they may find I am ignorant, but not ſollicitous. But ſure, of all perſons, Miniſters, Scholars, and eſpecially thoſe of the Vniverſities, have little cauſe to cenſure, or reprehend me, who have freely ventured the Whole of my Small Advantages from them, in aſſerting them in a day of the blackeſt danger and rebuke, that I truſt will ever befall the Church. However, I value not the taunts, the murmurs of any: I have learned by bearing, to contemn them. Frequent Endurance has bred an Apathy. But whatſoever men ſhall Mutter, Rail, or Declaim againſt theſe Writings, either out of a diſlike of the Subject here Treated of, or a perſonal hatred of my ſelf; yet in this I reſt ſatisfied, and aſſured, that the Truth here ſpoken of, will ſtand, whatſoever becomes of Him, that ſpoke it.

Math. 10. 33.

But whoſoever ſhall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven.

AS the great comprehenſive Goſpel duty is the denyal of Self, ſo the grand Goſpel ſin that confronts it, is the denyal of Chriſt. Theſe two are both the Commanding and the Dividing Principles of all our Actions: For whoſoever acts in oppoſition to one, it is alwaies in behalf of the other. None ever oppoſed Chriſt, but it was to gratifie Self: None ever renounced the Intereſt of Self, but from a prevailing love to the Intereſt of Chriſt. The ſubject I have here pitched upon, may ſeem improper in theſe times, and in this place, where the number of Profeſſors, and of men is the ſame; where the Cauſe and Intereſt of Chriſt has been ſo cryed up; and Chriſts Perſonall Reign and Kingdome ſo called for, and expected. But ſince it has been ſtill Preached up, but Acted down; and dealt with, as the Eagle in the Fable did with the Oyſter, carrying it up on high, that by letting it fall he might daſh it in peices: I ſay, ſince Chriſt muſt Reign, but his Truths be made to ſerve. I ſuppoſe it is but Reaſon, to diſtinguiſh between Profeſſion and Pretence; and to conclude, that mens preſent crying, *Haile King*, and *bending the knee* to Chriſt, are onely in order to his future Crucifixion.

For the diſcovery of the ſence of the Words, I ſhall enquire into their occaſion. From the very beginning of the Chapter wee have Chriſt conſulting the Propagation of the Goſpel; and in order to it

(being the onely way that he knew to effect it) sending forth a Ministery; and giving them a Commission, together with Instructions for the Execution of it. He would have them fully acquainted with the Nature and Extent of their Office; and so he joynes Commission with Instruction; by one he conveighs Power, by the other Knowledge. Supposing (I conceive) that upon such an Undertaking, the more *Learned* his Ministers were, they would prove never the less *faithfull*. And thus having fitted them, and stript them of all manner of defence, *v.* 9. He sends them forth amongst Wolves: A hard Expedition, you will say, to go amongst Wolves; but yet much harder to convert them into Sheep; and no less hard even to discerne some of them, possibly being under Sheeps cloathing; and so by the advantage of that dress, sooner felt than discovered: and probably also such as had both the properties of Wolves, that is, they could whine and howle, as well as bite and devoure. But that they might not goe altogether naked amongst their Enemies, the onely Armour that Christ allows them, it is Prudence and Innocence; *Be ye wise as Serpents, but harmlesse as Doves*, v.16. Weapons not at all offensive, yet most suitable to their Warfare, whose greatest Encounters were to be Exhortations, and whose only Conquest, Escape. Innocence it is the best caution, and we may unite the expression, to be *wise as a Serpent*, is to be *harmless as a Dove*. Innocence, it is like polish'd Armour, it adorns, and it defends. In summe, he tells them, that the opposition they should meet with, was the greatest imaginable, from the 16. to the 26. *v.* but in the ensuing verses he promises them an equall proportion of assistance; which if it was not Argument of force enough to out-weigh the fore-mentioned discouragements, he casts into the Balance, the promise of a Reward to such as should Execute, and of Punishment to such as should Neglect their Commission: The Reward in the former verse, *Whosoever shall confesse me before men*, &c. the punishment in this, *But whosoever shall deny*, &c. As if by way of preoccupation he should have said, Well: here you see your Commission, this is your Duty, these are your Discouragements: never seek for shifts and evasions from worldly afflictions; this is your Reward if you perform it, this is your Doome if you decline it.

As for the Explication of the words they are clear and easie; and their Originals in the Greek are of single signification, without any ambiguity;

ambiguity; and therefore I shall not trouble you, by proposing how they run in this, or in that Edition: or straining for an interpretation where there is no difficultie, or a distinction where there is no difference. The onely Exposition that I shall give of them, will be to compare them to other Parallel Scriptures, and peculiarly that in the 8 *Mark* 38. *Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words, in this adulterous and sinfull generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.* These words are a Comment upon my Text.

1. What is here in the Text called a *denying of Christ*, is there termed a *being ashamed of him*, that is, in those words the Cause is expressed, and here the Effect: for therefore we deny a thing, because we are shamed of it, First *Peter* is ashamed of Christ, then he denyes him.

2. What is here termed a denying *of Christ*, is there called a being ashamed of *Christ and his Words*: Christs truths are his second Self. And he that offers contempt to a Kings letters or edicts, virtually affronts the King; it strikes his words, but it rebounds upon his Person.

3. What is here said *before men*, is there phrased, in *this adulterous and sinfull generation*. These words import the hindrances of the duty enjoyned, which therefore is here purposely enforced with a *non obstante* to all opposition. The Terme *Adulterous* I conceive may cheifly relate to the Jewes who being nationally espoused to God by Covenant, every sinne of theirs was in a peculiar manner *spirituall Adultery*.

4. What is here said *I will deny him before my Father*, is there expressed: *I will be ashamed of him before my Father and his holy Angels*, that is when he shall come to Judgment, when Revenging Justice shall come in pomp, attended with the glorious Retinue of all the Host of Heaven. In short the sentence pronounced declares the Judgment, the solemnity of it, the Terror.

From the words, we may deduce these Observations.

1. *We shall find strong motives and temptations from men, to draw us to a deniall of Christ.*
2. *No Terrors, or Solicitations from men, though never so great can Warrant or Excuse such a deniall.*
3. *To deny Christs Words, is to deny Christ.*

But since these Observations are rather implyed then expressed in the words, I shall wave them, and instead of deducing a Doctrine, dis-

 tinct

tinct from the words, prosecute the wordsthem selves under this Doctrinall Paraphrase.

Whosoever shall deny, dis-owne or be ashamed of either the Person or truths of Jesus Christ for any fear or favour of man; shall with shame be disowned, and Eternally rejected by him at the dreadfull judgment of the great day,

The discussion of this shall lye in these things.

1. To shew how many wayes Christ and his truths may be denyed, and what is the deniall here cheifly intended.

2. To shew what are the causes that induce men to a deniall of Christ and his truths.

3. To shew how farre a man may consult his safety in time of persecution, without denying Christ.

4. To shew what is imported in Christs denying us before his Father in Heaven.

5. To apply all to the present Occasion.

But before I enter upon theseI must breifly premise this, that though the Text and the Doctrine run peremptory and absolute, *Whosoever denyes Christ, shall assuredly be denyed by him*: yet still there is a *tacit* condition in the words supposed, unless repentance intervene. For this and many other Scriptures, though as to their formall termes they are Absolute, yet as to their sence they are Conditionall. God in mercy has so framed, and temper'd his word, that we have for the most part, a Reserve of mercy wrap'd up in a Curse. And the very first judgment that was pronounced upon fallen man, it was with the allay of a promise. Whereseever we find a Curse to the Guilty Expressed, in the same words mercy to the Penitent is still Understood.

This premised, I come now to discusse the first thing, *viz.* How many wayes Christ and his truths may be denyed, *&c.* Here first in generall I assert, that we may deny him in all those acts that are capable of being morally good or evill: those are the proper Scene in which we act our Confessions or denialls of him. Accordingly therefore all wayes of denying Christ, *I* shall comprise under these three.

1. We may deny him and his truths by an Erroneous, Hereticall judgment. I know it is doubted whether a bare Error in judgment can condemne: but since truths absolutely necessary to Salvation, are so clearly revealed, that we cannot erre in them, unless we be notoriously wanting to our selves; herein the fault of the judgment is resolved

ſolved into a precedent default in the will: and ſo the caſe is put out of doubt. But here it may be replyed, are not truths of abſolute and fundamentall neceſſity, very diſputable: as the Deity of Chriſt, the Trinity of Perſons? if they are not in themſelves diſputable, why are they ſo much diſputed? Indeed I believe if we trace theſe diſputes to their originall cauſe we ſhall find, that they never ſprung from a reluctancy in Reaſon to embrace them. For this reaſon it ſelf dictates as moſt rationall, to aſſent to any thing though ſeemingly contrary to Reaſon, if it is revealed by God, and we are certaine of the Revelation. Theſe two ſuppoſed, theſe diſputes muſt needs ariſe only from curioſity and ſingularity; and theſe are the faults of a diſeaſed will. But ſome will further demand in behalf of theſe men, whether ſuch as aſſent to every word in Scripture, for ſo will thoſe that deny the naturall deity of Chriſt and the Spirit, can be yet ſaid in Doctrinalls to deny Chriſt? To this I anſwere, ſince words abſtracted from their proper ſenſe & ſignification, looſe the nature of words, & are only equivocally ſo called: inaſmuch as the perſons we ſpeak of, take them thus; & derive the Letter from Chriſt, but the ſignification from themſelves, they cannot be ſaid properly to aſſent ſo much as to the words of the Scripture. And ſo their caſe alſo is clear. But yet more fully to ſtate the matter, how farre a deniall of Chriſt in beleife and judgment is damnable: We will propoſe the queſtion. Whether thoſe that hold the fundamentalls of faith, may deny Chriſt damnably, in reſpect of thoſe ſuperſtructures and conſequences that ariſe from them? I anſwer in breif, by fundamentall truths are underſtood, 1. Either ſuch without the beleif of which we cannot be ſaved, or, 2. ſuch, the beleif of which is ſufficient to ſave: If the queſtion be propoſed of fundamentalls in this latter ſence, it containes its own anſwer; for he that beleives thoſe truths, the beleif of which is ſufficient to ſave, the disbeleif or deniall of their conſequences cannot damne. But what and how many theſe fundamentalls are, it will then be agreed upon, when all Sects, Opinions and Perſwaſions doe unite and conſent. 2ly. If we ſpeake of fundamentalls in the former ſence, as they are only truths without which we cannot be ſaved: it is manifeſt that we may believe them, and yet be damned for denying their conſequences: for that which is only a Condition without which we cannot be ſaved, is not therefore a Cauſe ſufficient to ſave: much more is required to the latter, then to the former. I conclude therefore, that to deny Chriſt in our judgment,

will

will condemne, and this concernes the learned: Christ demands the homage of your understandings: he wil have your Reason bend to him, you must put your Heads under his feet. And we know that heretofore he who had the Leprosy in this part, was to be pronounced utterly unclean. A poysoned reason, an infected judgment is Christs greatest enemy. And an Error in the judgment, it is like an impostume in the Head, which is alwayes noysome, and frequently mortall.

2. We may deny Christ verbally, and by orall expressions. Now our words they are the interpreters of our hearts. The transcripts of the judgment with some further addition of good or evill. He that interprets usually inlarges. What our judgment whispers in secret, these proclaime upon the house top. To deny Christ in the former imports enmity, but in these open Defiance. Christs passion is renewed in both: he that mis-judges of him, condemnes him, but he that blasphemes him spits in his face. Thus the Jewes & the Pharisees denyed Christ. *We know that this man is a sinner*, Joh. 9. 24. *and a deceiver*, Mat. 27. 63. *and he casts out devills, by the prince of the divells*. 12. Mat. 24. And thus Christ is dayly denyed, in many blasphemies printed & divulged, and many horrid Opinions vented against the truth. The Schooles dispute whether in moralls the external Action superadds any thing of good or evill to the internall elicit acts of the Will: but certainly the enmity of our judgments is wrought up to an high pitch before it rages in an open deniall. And it is a signe that it is grown too bigge for the Heart, when it seeks for vent in our words. Blasphemy uttered it is Error heightned with Impudence. *It* is sinne scorning a concealment, not only committed, but defended. He that denyes Christ in his judgment sins, but he that speakes his deniall, vouches and ownes his sinne: and so by publishing it, does what in him lies to make it Universall: and by writing it to establish it Eternall. There is another way of denying Christ with our Mouthes, which is Negative: that is when we doe not acknowledge and confesse him: but of this I shall have occasion to treat under the discussion of the Third general Head.

3. We may deny Christ in our Actions and Practice, and these speak much louder then our tongues. To have an Orthodox belief, and a true Profession, concurring with a bad life, it is only so deny Christ with a greater solemnity. Beleif and Profession will speak thee a Christian but very faintly, when thy conversation proclaimes thee an Infidell. Many while they have Preached Christ in their Sermons,

have

have read a lecture of Atheisme in their Practice. We have many here that speak of Godlinesse, Mortification and Self-deniall: but if these are so, what meanes the Bleating of the Sheep, and the lowing of the Oxen, the noise of their ordinary sinnes, and the cry of their great ones? If Godly, why doe they wallow and sleep in all the Carnalities of the world, under pretence of Christian liberty? Why doe they make religion ridiculous by pretending to Prophecy, and when their prophecies prove delusions, why doe they Blaspheme? If such self-denyers, what means the griping, the prejudice, the covetousnesse, and the pluralities preached against, and retained, and the Arbitrary Government of many? When such men Preach of self-denyal and humility. I cannot but think of *Seneca*, who praised Poverty, and that very safely, in the midst of his great Riches and Gardens; and even exhorted the world to throw away their Gold, perhaps (as one well conjectures) that he might gather it up; So these desire men to be humble, that they may domineer without opposition. But it is an easie matter to commend patience, when there is no danger of any tryall, to extoll humility in the midst of honours, to *begin a Fast after Dinner*. But O how Christ will deal with such persons when he shall draw forth all their Actions bare and stript from this deceiving vaile of their heavenly speeches! He will then say, it was not your sad Countenance, nor your Hypocriticall groaning, by which you did either confesse or honour me: but your Worldlinesse, your luxury, your sinister partial dealing; these have denyed me, these have wounded me, these have gone to my heart: these have caused the weak to stumble, and the prophane to blaspheme: these have offended the one, and hardned the other. You have indeed spoke me fair, you have saluted me with your lips, but even then youbetray'd me. Depart from me therefore you professors of holinesse, but you workers of iniquity.

And thus having shewn the three wayes by which Christ may be denyed, it may now be demanded, which is the Deniall here intended in the words.

Answere 1. I conceive if the words are taken as they were particularly and personally directed to the Apostles upon the occasion of their mission to preach the Gospel, so the denyall of him, was the not acknowledgement of the Deity or Godhead of Christ; and the reason to prove, that this was then principally intended, is this. Because this was the truth in those dayes cheifly opposed, and most disbeleived

beleived, as appeares, becauſe Chriſt and the Apoſtles did moſt earneſtly inculcate the beleif of this, and accepted men upon the bare acknowledgement of this, and Baptiſme was adminiſtred to ſuch as did but profeſs this, 8 *Acts* 37,38. And indeed as this one Aphoriſme *Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God*, is Vertually and eminently the whole Goſpel, ſo to confeſs or deny it is vertually to embrace or reject the whole round and ſeries of Goſpell truths. For he that acknowledges Chriſt to be the ſonne of God, by the ſame does conſequentially acknowledge that he is to be beleived and obeyed in whatſoever he does enjoyne and deliver to the ſonnes of men: and therefore that we are to repent and beleive and reſt upon him for ſalvation, and to deny our ſelves: and within the compaſs of this is included whatſoever is called Goſpell.

As for the manner of our denying the Deity of Chriſt here prohibited, I conceive it was by words and orall expreſſions verbally to deny, and diſ-acknowledge it: This I ground upon theſe reaſons.

1. Becauſe it was ſuch a deniall as *was before men*, and therefore conſiſted in open Profeſſion, for a deniall in judgment and practice, as ſuch, is not alwayes before men.

2. Becauſe it was ſuch a deniall or confeſſion of him as would appear in Preaching: but this is mannaged in words and verball profeſſion.

But now 2ly. If we take the words as they are a generall precept equally relating to all times, and to all perſons, though delivered only upon a particular occaſion to the Apoſtles (as I ſuppoſe they are to be underſtood) ſo I think they comprehend all the Three wayes mentioned of confeſſing or denying Chriſt: but principally in reſpect of practice, and that 1. Becauſe by this he is moſt honoured or diſhonoured. 2. Becauſe without this the other two cannot ſave. 3. Becauſe thoſe who are ready enough to confeſs him both in judgment and profeſſion, are for the moſt part very prone to deny him ſhamefully in their doings.

Paſs we now to a Second thing, to ſhew

What are the Cauſes inducing men to deny Chriſt in his truths. I ſhall propoſe Three.

1. The ſeeming ſuppoſed abſurdity of many truths: Vpon this foundation Hereſie allwayes builds. The Heathens derided the Chriſtians, that ſtill they required and preſsed beleif, and well they might

might (say they) since the Articles of their Religion are so absurd, that upon Principles of Science they can never winne assent. It is easy to draw it forth and demonstrate, how upon this score the cheif Heresies that now are said to trouble the Church, doe oppose and deny the most important truths in Divinity. As first, hear the denyer of the Deity and satisfaction of Christ. What (saies he) can the same Person be God and man? the Creature and the Creator? can we ascribe such attributes to the same thing, whereof one implyes a Negation and a Contradiction of the other? Can he be also Finite and Infinite, when to be finite is not to be infinite, and to be infinite not to be finite? And when we distinguish between the Person, and the Nature, was not that distinction an invention of the Schooles, favoring rather of Metaphysicks, then Divinity? If we say that he must have bin God, because he was to mediate between us and God, by the same reason they will reply, we should need a Mediator between us and Christ, who is equally God, equally offended. Then for his satisfaction, they will demand to whom this satisfaction is paid? If to God, then God payes a Price to himself: and what is it else to require and need no satisfaction, then for one to satisfie himself? Next comes in the Denyer of the Decrees and free grace of God. What (saies he) shall we exhort, admonish, and entreat the Saints to beware of falling away finally, and at the same time assert that it is impossible for them so to fall? what shall we erect two contradictory Wills in God, or place two contradictoryes in the same Will, and make the Will of his Purpose and Intention run counter to the Will of his Approbation? Hear another concerning the Scripture and Justification. What (saies the Romanist, relye in matters of faith upon a private Spirit? How doe you know this is the sence of such a Scripture? Why by the Spirit. But how will you try that Spirit to be of God? Why by the scripture: this he explodes as a circle, and so derides it. Then for Justification. How are you Justified by an imputed Righteousness? Is it yours before it is imputed, or not: if not (as we must say) is this to be Justified, to have that accounted yours, that is not yours? But again, did you ever hear of any man made rich or wise by imputation? why then Righteous or Just? Now these seeming Paradoxes, attending Gospell truths, cause men of weak and prejudiced intellectualls to deny them, and in them Christ, being ashamed to owne faith so much (as they think) to the disparagement of their Reason.

2. The Second thing causing men to deny the truths of Christ, is their, Vnprofitablenes. And no wonder if here men forsake the truth and assert interest. To be Pious is the way to be Poore. Truth still gives its followers its own Badge and Livery, a despised nakedness. It is hard to maintaine the truth, but much harder to be maintained by it: could it ever yet feed, clothe, or defend its assertors? Did ever any man quench his thirst, or satisfie his hunger with a Notion? Did ever any one live upon Propositions? The Testimony of *Brutus* concerning vertue, is the apprehension of most concerning truth: that it is a Name, but lives and estates are things, and therefore not to be thrown away upon Words. That we are neither to worship or cringe to any thing under the Deity is a truth to strict for a *Naaman*: he can be content to worship the true God, but then it must be in the house of *Rimmon*: the reason was implyed in his condition, he was Captaine of the Host, and therefore he thought it reason good to bow to *Rimmon*, rather then endanger his place: better Bow, then Break. Indeed some times Providence casts things so, that truth and interest ly the same way: and when it is wrapt up in this covering men can be content to follow it, to presse hard after it: but it is as we pursue some beasts only for their skins: take of the covering, and though men obtaine the truth, they would lament the losse of that. As *Jacob* wept and mourned over the torn Coat, when *Joseph* was alive. It is incredible to consider how interest outweighes truth. If a thing in it self be doubtfull, let it make for interest and it shall be raised at least into a Probable; and if a truth be certaine, and thwart interest, it will quickly fetch it down to but a Probability; nay if it does not carry with it an impregnable Evidence, it will goe near to debase it to a down right falsity. How much interest casts the Ballance in cases dubious, I could give sundry instances, let one suffice. And that concerning the unlawfullnes of Usury. Most of the Learned men in the world successively both Heathen and Christian doe assert the taking of Use to be utterly unlawfull; yet the Divines of the Reformed Church beyond the Seas though most severe and rigid in other things, doe generally affirme it to be lawfull. That the case is doubtfull and may be disputed with plausible arguments on either side, we may well grant: But what then is the reason that makes these Divines so unanimously concurre in this opinion? Indeed I shall not affirme this to be the reason, but it may seem so to many: that they receive

receive their Salaryes by way of penſion, in preſent ready money, and ſo have no other way to improve them; ſo that it may be ſuſpected, that the change of their ſalary, would be the ſtrongeſt argument to change their opinion. The truth is, Intereſt is the grand wheele, and ſpring that moves the whole Vniverſe. Let Chriſt and truth ſay what they will, if intereſt will have it, gain muſt be Godlineſs: If Enthuſiaſme is in requeſt, learning muſt be inconſiſtent with Grace. If pay growes ſhort, the Vniverſity Maintenance muſt be too great. Rather then *Pilate* will be counted *Ceſars* enemy, he will pronounce Chriſt innocent one hour, and condemne him the next. How Chriſt is made to truckle under the world, and how his truths are denyed and ſhuffled with for profit and pelfe, the cleareſt proof would be by Induction and Example. But as it is the moſt clear, ſo here it would be the moſt unpleaſing: Wherefore I ſhall paſſe this over, ſince the world is now ſo peccant upon this account, that I am afraid *Inſtances* would be miſtaken for *Invectives*.

3. The Third Cauſe inducing men to deny Chriſt in his truths, is their apparent danger. To confeſſe Chriſt, is the ready way to be caſt out of the Synagogue. The Church, it is a place of Graves as well as of Worſhip and profeſſion. To be reſolute in a Good cauſe is to bring upon our ſelves the puniſhments due to a Bad. Truth indeed it is a poſſeſſion of the higheſt value, and therefore it muſt needs expoſe the owner to much danger. Chriſt is ſometimes pleaſed to make the profeſſion of himſelf coſtly, and a man cannot buy the truth but he muſt pay down his life and his deareſt blood for it. Chriſtianity marks a man out for deſtruction: and Chriſt ſometime chalks out ſuch a way to ſalvation, that ſhall verifie his own ſaying, *He that will ſave his life ſhall looſe it.* The firſt ages of the Church had a more abundant experience of this: *Paul* and the reſt, what they planted by their Preaching, they watered with their blood. We know their uſage was ſuch as Chriſt foretold, he ſent them to Wolves, and the common courſe then was *Chriſtianos ad Leones*. For a man to give his name to Chriſtianity in thoſe dayes, was to liſt himſelf a Martyr, & to bid farewell not only to the pleaſures but alſo to the hopes of this life. Neither was it a ſingle death only that then attended this profeſſion, but the Terror and ſharpneſſe of it redoubled was in the manner and circumſtance. They had Perſecutors, whoſe Invention was as great as their cruelty. Wit and malice conſpired to find out ſuch tortures, ſuch deaths, and thoſe

of such incredible anguish, that only the manner of dying was the Punishment, Death it self the deliverance. To be a Martyr signifies only to witness the truth of Christ, but the witnessing of the truth was then so generally attended with this Event, that Martyrdome now signifies not only to witness, but to witness by death. The word besides its own signification importing their practice: And since Christians have been freed from Heathens, Christians themselves have turned Persecutors. Since Rome from Heathen was turned Christian, it has improved its persecution into an Inquisition. Now when Christ and truth are upon these termes, that men cannot confesse him, but upon paine of death, the reason of their Apostacy and Deniall is clear, men will be Wise and leave Truth and misery to such as love it, they are resolved to be Cunning, let others run the hazard of being Sincere. If they must be good at so high a rate, they know they may be Safe at a cheaper. *Si negare sufficiat, quis erit Nocens?* If to deny Christ will save them, the truth shall never make them guilty. Let Christ and his flock lye open & exposed to all weather of Persecution, Foxes will be sure to have holes. And if it comes to this that they must either renounce Religion, deny and blaspheme Christ, or forfeit their lives to the fire or the sword, it is but inverting *Jobs* wives advice, *Curse God and live.*

3. We proceed now to the Third thing, which is to shew, how farre a man may consult his safety, *&c.*

This he may doe Two Wayes.

1. By withdrawing his Person. Martyrdome is an Heroick act of faith. An Atcheivement beyond an Ordinary pitch of it: to you saies the *Spirit it is given to suffer*, 1 Phil. 29. It is a peculiar additionall gift: it is a distinguishing excellency of degree, not an essentiall consequent of its Nature. *Be ye harmlesse as Doves* saies Christ; and it is as Naturall to them to take flight upon danger, as to be Innocent: Let every man throughly consult the temper of his faith, and weigh his courage with his feares, his Weakness and his Resolutions together, and take the measure of both, and see which preponderates, and if his spirit faints, if his heart misgives and melts at the very thoughts of the fire, let him flye and secure his own soul, and Christs honour. *Non negat Christum fugiendo qui ideò fugit ne neget*: He does not deny Christ by flying, who therefore flyes that he may not deny him. Nay, he does not so much decline, as rather change his Martyrdome: He flies from the Flame, but repaires to a Desart; to poverty and hunger

in

in a wilderneſs. Whereas if he would diſpenſe with his Conſcience, & deny his Lord, or ſwallow down two or three Contradictory oaths, he ſhould neither fear the one, nor be forced to the other.

2. By concealing his judgement. A man ſometimes is no more bound to ſpeak than to deſtroy himſelf; and as Nature abhors this, ſo Religion does not command that. In the times of the Primitive Church, when the Chriſtians dwelt amongſt Heathens, it is reported of a certain Mayd, how ſhe came from her Fathers houſe, to one of the Tribunals of the Gentiles, and declared her ſelf a Chriſtian, ſpit in the Judges face, and ſo provoked him to cauſe her to be executed. But will any ſay that this was to confeſſe Chriſt, or dye a Martyr? He that uncalled for, uncompelled, comes and proclaims a Perſecuted Truth, for which he is ſure to dye, he onely dyes a Confeſſour of his own folly, and a Sacrifice to his own rathneſs. Martyrdome is ſtampt ſuch onely by Gods command; and hee that ventures upon it without a Call, muſt endure it without a Reward: Chriſt will ſay, *who required this at your hands?* His Goſpel does not dictate imprudence: No Evangelical Precept juſtles out that of a lawfull ſelf-preſervation. He therefore that thus throws himſelf upon the Sword, he runs to Heaven before he is ſent for: where though perhaps Chriſt may in mercy receive the Man, yet he will be ſure to diſown the Martyr.

And thus much concerning thoſe lawfull wayes of ſecuring our ſelves in time of Perſecution; not as if theſe were alwaies lawfull: For ſometimes a man is bound to confeſſe Chriſt openly, though hee dyes for it; and to conceal a Truth is to deny it. But now to ſhew when it is our duty, and when unlawfull to take theſe courſes, by ſome generall rule of a perpetual, never-failing truth, none ever would yet preſume: For, as *Ariſtotle* ſaies, *We are not to expect Demonſtrations in Ethicks, or Politicks, nor to build certain rules upon the contingency of humane Actions*: So, in as much as our flying from Perſecution, our confeſſing, or concealing perſecuted Truths, vary and change their very nature, according to different circumſtances of time, place, and perſons, we cannot limit their Directions within any one univerſall Precept. You will ſay then, How ſhall we know when to confeſs, when to conceale a Truth? when to wait for, when to decline Perſecution? Indeed the onely way that I think can be preſcribed in this caſe, is to be earneſt, and importunate with God in Prayer for ſpecial

direction: And it is not to be imagined, that he who is both faithfull and mercifull, will leave a ſincere ſoul in the dark upon ſuch an occaſion. But this I ſhall adde, that the Miniſters of God are not to evade, or take refuge in any of theſe two forementioned wayes. They are publique perſons: and good Shepheards muſt then chiefly ſtand cloſe to the Flock when the Wolf comes. For them to be ſilent in the Cauſe of Chriſt is to renounce it; and to fly, is to deſert it. As for that place urged in favour of the contrary, in 23. *v.* *When they perſecute you in this City flee into another*, it proves nothing; for the Precept was particular, and concerned onely the Apoſtles; and that but for that time in which they were then ſent to the Jews, at which time Chriſt kept them as a reſerve for the future: For when after his death they were indifferently ſent both to Jews and Gentiles, wee find not this clauſe in their Commiſſion, but they were to ſigne the Truths they preached with their blood; as we know they actually did. And moreover, when Chriſt bids them, being perſecuted in one City fly into another, it was not (as *Grotius* acutely obſerves) that they might lye hid, or bee ſecure in that City, but that there they might Preach the Goſpel: So that their flight here was not to ſecure their Perſons, but to continue their Buſineſs. I conclude therefore, that faithfull Miniſters are to ſtand and endure the brunt. A common Souldier may dye, when it is the duty of him that holds the Standard to dye upon the place. And we have abundant of encouragements ſo to doe. Chriſt has ſeconded and ſweetned his command with his promiſe: Yea the thing it ſelf is not onely our duty, but our glory. And he that has done this work, has in the very work partly received his wages. And were it put to my choice, I think I ſhould chuſe rather with ſpitting and ſcorn to be tumbled into the duſt in blood, bearing witneſs to any known Truth of our dear Lord, now oppoſed by the Enthuſiaſts of the preſent Age, than by a denyal of thoſe Truths through Blood and Perjury wade to a Scepter, and Lord it in a Throne. And we need not doubt, but Truth, however oppreſſed, will have ſome followers, and at length prevaile. A Chriſt, though Crucified, will ariſe: And as it is in the 11 *Revel.* 3. *The Witneſſes will Propheſie, though it be in Sackcloth.*

Having thus diſpatched the third thing, I proceed to the fourth, which is to ſhew, what it is for Chriſt to deny us before his Father in Heaven. Hitherto we have treated of mens carriage to Chriſt in this

this world; now we will describe his carriage to them in the other. These words clearly relate to the last Judgement, and they are a Summary description of his proceeding with men at that day.

And here we will consider:

1. The Action it self, *He will deny them.*

2. The Circumstance of the Action, *Hee will deny them before his Father, and the holy Angels.*

1. Concerning the first; Christs denying us, is otherwise expressed in the 13 *Luke* 27. *I know you not.* To *Know* in Scripture language is to Approve; and so not to Know, is to Reject and Condemne. Now who knows how many Woes are crowded into this one sentence, *I will deny him*? It is (to say no more) a compendious expression of Hell, an Eternity of Torments comprised in a word: it is Condemnation it self, and what is most of all, it is Condemnation from the mouth of a Saviour. O the inexpressible horrour that will seize upon a poor soul when he stands arraigned at the Barre of Divine Justice! When he shall look about, and see his Accuser his Judge, the Witnesses all of them his remorsless Adversaries: The Law impleading, Mercy and the Gospel upbraiding him, the Devill, his grand Accuser, drawing his Indictment; numbring his sinnes with the greater exactnes, and aggravating them with the cruellest bitternes, and Conscience, like a thousand Witnesses, attesting every Article, flying in his face, and rending his very heart. And then after all, Christ, from whom only Mercy could be expected, owning the Accusation. It will be Hell enough to hear the Sentence; the very Promulgation of the Punishment will be part of the Punishment, and anticipate the Execution. *If Peter* was so abashed when Christ gave him a look after his denyall; if there was so much dread in his looks when he stood as Prisoner, how much greater will it bee when he sits as a Judge? If it was so fearfull when he looked his Denyer into Repentance, what will it be when he shall look him into Destruction? Believe it, when we shall hear an Accusation from an Advocate, our Eternall doome from our Intercessour, it will convince us that a Denyall of Christ is something more than a few transitory words: What trembling, what out-cries, what astonishment will there be upon the pronouncing this Sentence! Every word will come upon the sinner like an Arrow striking through his reines; like Thunder that is heard, and consumes at the same instant. Yea it will

be

be a Denyal with ſcorn, with taunting exprobrations; and to be miſerable without commiſeration, is the height of miſery. He that falls below Pitty, can fall no lower. Could I give you a lively repreſentation of guilt and horrour on this hand, and paint out eternall wrath, decypher eternall vengeance on the other, then might I ſhew you the condition of a ſinner hearing himſelf denyed by Chriſt: And for thoſe whom Chriſt has denyed, it will be in vaine to appeale to the Father, unleſs wee can imagine, that thoſe whom Mercy has condemned, Juſtice will abſolve.

2. For the Circumſtance, *He will deny us before his Father, and the holy Angels.* As much as God is more glorious than man, ſo much is it more glorious to be confeſſed before him, than before men: And ſo much glory as there is in being confeſsed, ſo much diſhonour there is in being denyed. If there could be any room for comfort after the ſentence of Damnation, it would be this, to be executed in ſecret, to periſh Unobſerved. As it is ſome allay to the infamy of him that dyed ignominiouſly, to be buried privately. But when a mans folly muſt be ſpread open before Angels, and all his baſeneſs ript up before thoſe pure Spirits, this will be a double Hell: to be thruſt into utter Darkneſs, onely to be puniſhed by it, without the benefit of being concealed. When Chriſt ſhall compare himſelf, who was denyed, and the thing for which he was denyed together, and parallel his merits with a luſt, and lay Eternity in the Ballance with a triſle, then the folly of the ſinners choice ſhall be the greateſt ſting of his deſtruction. For a man ſhall not have the advantage of his Former Ignorance and Errour, to approve his ſinne: Things that appeared amiable by the light of this world, will appear of a different odious hue in the clear diſcoveries of the Next: As that which appears to be of this colour by a dimn candle, will be found to be of another look'd upon in the day. So when Chriſt ſhall have cleared up mens apprehenſions about the value of things; he will propoſe that worthy Prize for which he was denyed: He will hold it up to open view, and call upon Men and Angels: Behold, look, here is the thing, here's that peice of dirt, that windy applauſe, that poor tranſitory pleaſure, that contemptible danger, for which I was diſhonoured, my Truths diſowned, and for which life, eternity, and God himſelf was ſcorned and trampled upon by this ſinner: Judge all the world, whether what he ſo deſpiſed in the other life, he deſerves

ſerves to enjoy in this? How will the condemned ſinner then crawle forth, and appear in his filth and ſhame before that undefiled, Tribunall, like a Toade or a Snake in a Kings preſence Chamber. Nothing ſo irkſome as to have ones folly diſplaied before the Prudent, ones impurity before the Pure: And all this before that company ſurrounding him, from which he is neither able to look off, nor yet to look upon. A diſgrace put upon a man in company is unſupportable: it is heightned according to the greatneſſe, and multiplyed according to the number of the perſons that hear it. And now as this circumſtance [*before his Father*] fully ſpeaks the ſhame, ſo alſo it ſpeaks the danger of Chriſts then denying us. For when the accuſation is heard, and the perſon ſtands convict, God is immediately lifting up his hand to inflict the eternal blow; and when Chriſt denyes to exhibit a ranſome, to ſtep between the ſtroak then coming, and the ſinner, it muſt inevitably fall upon him, and ſinke his guilty ſoul into that deep and bottomleſs gulph of endleſs perdition. This therefore is the ſumme of Chriſts denying us before his Father, *viz.* Unſupportable ſhame, unavoydable deſtruction.

I proceed now to the Vſes that may be drawn from the Truths delivered. And here (Right Honourable) not only the preſent occaſion, but even the words themſelves ſeem eminently to addreſſe an Exhortation to your Honours. As for others not to deny Chriſt, is openly to profeſs him; ſo for you who are inveſted with Authority, not to deny him, is to defend him. Know therefore, that Chriſt does not onely deſire, but demand your defence, and that in a double reſpect.

1. In reſpect of his Truth. 2. Of his Members.

1. He requires that you ſhould defend and confeſs him in his Truth. Hereſie it is a Tare ſometimes not to be pulled up but by the Civill Magiſtrate. The word *Liberty of Conſcience*, is much abuſed for the defence of it, becauſe not well underſtood. Every man may have Liberty of Conſcience to think and judge as he pleaſes, but not to vent what he pleaſe. The reaſon is, becauſe Conſcience bounding it ſelfe within the thoughts, is of private concernment, and the cognizance of theſe belong only to God: but when an opinion is publiſhed, it concerns all that hear it, and the publique is endamaged, and therefore becomes puniſhable by the Magiſtrate, to whom the care of the publique is entruſted. But there is one truth that concerns both Miniſtery and Magiſtracy, and All: which is oppoſed by thoſe who af-

firm, that *none ought to Govern upon the Earth but Christ in person*: Absurdly, as if the Powers that are, destroyed his; as if a Deputy were not consistent with a King; as if there were any Opposition in Subordination. They affirm also, that the Wicked have no right to their Estates, but onely the Faithfull, that is, themselves, ought to possess the Earth. And it is not to be questioned, but when they come to explaine this principle, by putting it into execution, there will be but few that have estates at present, but would be either found, or made Wicked. I shall not be so urgent to press you to confess Christ, by asserting and owning the Truth contrary to this, since it does not only oppose Truth, but Propriety, and here to deny Christ, would be to deny your Selves.

2. Christ requires you to own and defend him in his Members; and amongst these, the chief of them, and such who most fall in your way, the Ministers; I say, that despised, abject, oppressed sort of men, the Ministers; whom the world would make Antichristian, and so deprive them of Heaven, and also strip them of that poor remainder of their Maintenance, and so allow them no portion upon the Earth. You may now spare that distinction of Scandalous Ministers, when it is even made Scandalous to be a Minister. And as for their discouragements in the Courts of the Law, I shall onely note this, that for these many years last past, it has been the constant observation of all, that if a Minister had a Cause depending in the Court, it was ten to one but it went against him. I cannot believe your Law justles out the Gospel; but if it be thus used to undermine Christ in his Servants, beware that such Judgements passed upon them, doe not fetch down Gods Judgements upon the Land; and that for such abuse of the Law, Christ does not in anger deprive both you and us of its Vse. (My Lords) I make no doubt, but you will meet with many Suites in your Course, in which the persons we speak of are concerned, as it is easie to Prognosticate from those many worthy Petitions preferred against them, for which the well-affected Petitioners will one day receive but small Thanks from the Court of Heaven. But however their Causes speed in your Tribunals, know that *Christ* himself will recognize them in a greater. And then what a different face will be put upon things! When the usurping, devouring *Nimrods* of the World shall be cast with scorn on the left hand: And Christ himself in that great Consistory shall daign to step down from his Throne,

and

and ſingle out a poor deſpiſed Miniſter, and as it were taking him by the hand, preſent him to, and openly thus confeſs him before his Father. Father, here is a poore ſervant of mine, that for doing his duty impartially, for keeping a good conſcience, and teſtifying my truths in an Hypocriticall pretending age, was wrong'd, trood upon, ſtript of all: Father, I will that there be now a diſtinction made, between ſuch as have owned & confeſſed me with the loſs of the world, and thoſe that have denyed, perſecuted and inſulted over me: It will be in vain then to come and creep for mercy: and ſay, Lord, when did we inſult over thee? when did we ſee thee in our Courts, and deſpiſed or oppreſſed thee? Chriſts reply will be then quick and ſharp: Verily in as much as you did it to one of theſe little, poor, deſpiſed ones, ye did it unto Me.

2. Uſe is of information, to ſhew us the danger as well as the baſeneſs of a daſtardly Spirit; in aſſerting the intereſt and truth of Chriſt. Since Chriſt has made a Chriſtian courſe a Warfare, of all men living, a Coward is the moſt unfit to make a Chriſtian: whoſe infamy is not ſo great, but it is ſometimes leſs then his perill. A Coward does not allwayes ſcape with diſgrace, but ſometimes alſo he loſes his life: wherefore let all ſuch know, as can enlarge their conſciences like Hell, and call any ſinfull compliance ſubmiſſion, and ſtyle a Cowardly ſilence in Chriſts cauſe, diſcretion and prudence. I ſay let them know, that Chriſt will one day ſcorn them, and ſpit them with their policy and prudence into Hell; and then let them conſult how politick they were for a temporall Emolument, to throw away Eternity. All that cauſes men to deny Chriſt, it is either the Enjoyments, or the miſeries of this life: but alaſs at the day of Judgment all theſe will be expired, and as One well Obſerves, what are we the better for pleaſure, or the worſe for ſorrow when it is paſt? but then ſinne and guilt will be ſtill freſh, and Heaven and Hell will be then yet to Begin. If ever it was ſeaſonable to preach Courage in the deſpiſed, abuſed cauſe of Chriſt, it is now, when his truths are Reformed into nothing, when the hands and hearts of his faithfull Miniſters are weakned, & even broke, and his Worſhip extirpated in a mockery, that his honour may be advanced. Well, to eſtabliſh our hearts in duty, let us before hand propoſe to our ſelves the worſt that can happen. Should God in his judgment ſuffer *England* to be transformed into a *Munſter*. Should the faithfull be every where Maſſacred. Should the places of Learning be

demoliſhed, and our Colledges reduced (not only as One in his Zeal would have it) to *Three*, but to none. Yet aſſuredly Hell is worſe then all this, and this is the Portion of ſuch as deny Chriſt: wherefore let our diſcouragements be what they will: loſſe of Places, loſſe of Eſtates, loſs of Life and Relations, yet ſtill this ſentence ſtands ratified in Decretals of Heaven. *Curſed be that man, that for any of theſe, ſhall deſert the truth, and deny his Lord.*

ECCLE-

ECCLESIASTICALL

POLICY

THE

BEST POLICY:

OR,

RELIGION

The best Reason of STATE:

In a SERMON delivered before the Honourable Society of

LINCOLNES INN.

BY

RO. SOUTH.

OXFORD,
Printed by *A. L.* for *Tho. Robinson*, 1660.

1 King. 13. ch. 33, 34. v.

After this thing Jeroboam *returned not from his evill way, but made again of the loweſt of the people Prieſts of the High places: whoſoever would he conſecrated him, and he became one of the Prieſts of the High places.*

And this thing became ſin unto the houſe of Jeroboam, *even to cut it off, and to deſtroy it from off the face of the Earth.*

Jeroboam (from the name of a perſon become the character of impiety) is reported to Poſterity as eminent, or rather notorious, for two things; Uſurpation of Government, and Innovation of Religion. 'Tis confeſſed, the former is expreſly ſaid to have been from God; but ſince God may Order, and Diſpoſe, what he does not Approve; and Uſe the wickedneſs of men while he forbids it; the deſign of the Firſt cauſe does not excuſe the malignity of the ſecond: And therefore the Advancement and Scepter of *Jeroboam* was in that Senſe onely the work of God, in which it is ſaid, 3 *Amos 6. that there is no evill in the City which the Lord has not done.* But from his attempts upon the Civill Power, he proceeds to Innovate Gods Worſhip; and from the ſubjection of mens Bodies and Eſtates to enſlave their Conſciences, as knowing that true Religion is no freind to an unjuſt Title. Such was afterwards the way of *Mahomet*, to the Tyrant to joyne the Impoſtor, and what he had got by the Sword to confirm by the *Alcoran*; raiſing his Empire upon two Pillars, Conqueſt, and Inſpiration. *Jeroboam* being thus advanced, and thinking Policy the beſt

Piety,

Piety, though indeed in nothing ever more befooled; the nature of ſin being not onely to defile, but to infatuate. In the 11. chap. and the 27. v. he thus argues; *If this people goe up to doe Sacrifice in the houſe of the Lord at Jeruſalem, then ſhall the heart of this people turne again unto their Lord, even unto Rehoboam King of Judah, and they ſhall kill me, and goe again unto Rehoboam King of Judah.* As if hee ſhould have ſaid. The true Worſhip of God, and the converſe of thoſe that uſe it, diſpoſe men to a conſiderate, lawfull ſubjection. And therefore I muſt take another courſe: my Practiſe muſt not be better than my Title; what was won by Force muſt be continued by Deluſion. Thus ſin is uſually ſeconded with ſin: and a man ſeldome commits one ſinne to pleaſe, but he commits another to defend himſelf. As 'tis frequent for the Adulterer to commit Murder, to conceal the ſhame of his Adultery. But let us ſee *Jeroboams* politick procedure in the next ver. *Whereupon the King took counſel, and made two Calves of Gold, and ſaid unto them, it is too much for you to goe up to Jeruſalem, behold thy Gods O Iſrael.* As if he had made ſuch an Edict: *I Jeroboam, by the advice of my Council, conſidering the great diſtance of the Temple, and the great charges that poor people are put to in going thither; as alſo the intollerable burden of paying the firſt fruit, and tythes to the Prieſt, have conſidered of a way that may be more eaſie, and leſſe burthenſome to the people, as alſo more comfortable to the Prieſts themſelves; and therefore ſtrictly enjoyne, that none henceforth preſume to repaire to the Temple at Jeruſalem, eſpecially ſince God is not tyed to any place or form of Worſhip; as alſo becauſe the Devotion of men is apt to be clogged by ſuch Ceremonies; therefore both for the eaſe of the people, as alſo for the advancement of Religion, we require and command, that all henceforth forth forbear going up to Jeruſalem.* Queſtionleſs theſe, and ſuch other Reaſons the Impoſtor uſed to inſinuate his devout Idolatry. And thus the Calves were ſet up, to which Oxen muſt be ſacrificed; the God and the Sacrifice out of the ſame Herd. And becauſe *Iſrael* was not to returne to *Egypt*, *Egypt* was brought back to them; that is, the Egyptian way of Worſhip, the *Apis*, or *Serapis*, which was nothing but the Image of a Calfe, or Oxe, as is clear from moſt Hiſtorians. Thus *Jeroboam* having procured his people gods, the next thing was to provide Prieſts. Hereupon to the Calves he addes a Commiſſion, for the *approving*, *trying*, and admitting the Faſcality and loweſt of the people to miniſter in that ſervice:

ſervice: ſuch as kept Cattel, with a little change of their Office, were admitted to make Oblations to them. And doubtleſs beſides the approbation of theſe, there was a Commiſſion alſo, to *eject* ſuch of the Prieſts and Levites of God, as being too Ceremoniouſly addicted to the Temple, would not ſerve *Jeroboam* before God, nor worſhip his Calves for their Gold, nor approve thoſe two glittering ſins for any reaſon of State whatſoever. Having now perfected Divine Worſhip, and prepared both Gods and Prieſts: In the next place, that he might the better teach his falſe Prieſts the way of their new Worſhip, he beginnes the Service himſelf, and ſo countenances by his example, what he had enjoyned by his command, in the 1. *v.* of this chapter, *And Jeroboam ſtood by the Altar to burne Incenſe.* Burning of Incenſe was then the Miniſterial Office amongſt them, as Preaching is now amongſt us. So that to repreſent you the nature of *Jeroboams* Action: It was, as if in a Chriſtian Nation the chief Governour ſhould authorize and encourage all the ſcumme and refuſe of the people to Preach, and call them to the Miniſtry, by uſing to Preach, and invading the Miniſterial Function himſelf. But *Jeroboam* reſted not here, but while he was buſie in his work, and a Prophet immediately ſent by God declares againſt his Idolatry, he endeavours to ſeize upon, and commit him, in the 4. *v.* *He held forth his hand from the Altar, and ſaid, lay hold of him.* Thus we have him compleating his ſinne, and by a ſtrange Impoſition of hands perſecuting the true Prophets as wel as ordaining falſe. But it was a natural tranſition, and no wayes wonderful to ſee him that ſtood affronting God with falſe Incenſe in the right hand, perſecute with the left, and abet the Idolatry of one Arme with the Violence of the other. Now if we lay all theſe things together, and conſider the parts, riſe, and degrees of his ſinne, we ſhall find, that it was not for nothing, that the Spirit of God, ſo frequently, and bitterly in Scripture ſtigmatizes this perſon: For it repreſents him, firſt incroaching upon the Civil Government, thence changing that of the Church, debaſing the Office that God had made ſacred; introducing a falſe way of Worſhip, deſtroying the right. And in this we have a full and fair deſcription of a foul thing; that is, of an Uſurper, and an Impoſtor: or, to uſe one word more comprehenſive than both, of *Jeroboam the ſonne of Nebat who made Iſrael to ſinne.*

From the Story and Practise of *Jeroboam* we might gather these Observations.

1. *That God sometimes punishes a Notorious sinne, by suffering the Sinner to fall into a worse.*

Thus God punished the Rebellion of the Israelites by permitting them to fall into Idolatry.

2. *There is nothing so absurd but may be obtruded upon the Vulgar under pretence of Religion.*

Certainly otherwise a Golden Calfe could never have been made either the Object, or the means of Divine Worship.

3. *Sin, especially that, of perverting Gods Worship, as it leaves a guilt upon the Soul, so it perpetuates a blot upon the Name.*

Hence nothing so frequent, as for the Spirit of God to expresse wicked, irreligious Kings, by comparing them to *Ahab* or *Jeroboam*. It being usuall to make the first and most eminent in any kind, not onely the Standard for Comparison, but also the Rule of Expression.

But I shall insist onely upon the words of the Text, and what shall be drawn from thence. There are two things in the words that may seem to require Explication.

1. *What is meant by the High places.*

2. *By the Consecration of the Priests.*

1. Concerning the High places. The use of these in the Divine Worship was generall and ancient. And as *Dionysius Vossius* observes in his Notes upon *Moses Maimonides*, the first way that was used, long before Temples were either built, or thought lawfull. The reason of this seemes to be, because those places did not shut up, or confine the Immensity of God, as they thought an house did, and withall gave his Worshippers a nearer approach to heaven by their Height. Hence we read that the Samaritanes worshipped upon Mount *Gerezim*, 4 *Joh.* 20. *v.* And *Samuel* went up to the High place to sacrifice, 1 *Sam.* 9. 14. And *Solomon* sacrificed at the High place in *Gibeon*, 1 *King.* 3. 4. Yea the Temple it selfe was at length built upon a Mount or High place, 2 *Chr.* 3. 1. You will say then, Why are these places condemned? I answer, that the use of them was not condemned, as absolutely and alwaies unlawfull in it selfe, but onely after the Temple was built, and that God had professed to put his Name in that place, and no other: Therefore what was lawfull in the

the practice of *Samuel* and *Solomon* before the Temple was in being, was now detestable in *Jeroboam*, since it was constituted by God the onely place for his Worship. To bring this Consideration to the times of Christianity. Because the Apostles and Primitive Christians preached in houses, and had onely private meetings, in regard they were under Persecution, and had no Churches; this cannot warrant the practice of those now adaies; that preferre Houses before Churches, and a Conventicle before the Congregation.

2. For the second thing, which is the Consecration of the Priests, it seems to have been correspondent to Ordination in the Christian Church. Idolaters themselves were not so farre gone, as to venture upon the Priesthood without Consecration and a Call. To shew all the Solemnities of this would be tedious, and here unnecessary: The Hebrew word which we render to Consecrate, signifies *to fill the hand*, which indeed imports the manner of Consecration, which was done by filling the hand: for the Priest cut a peice of the Sacrifice, and put it into the hands of him that was to be consecrated; by which Ceremony he received right to Sacrifice, and so became a Priest. As our Ordination in the Christian Church, is said to have been heretofore transacted by the Bishops delivering of the Bible into the hands of him that was to be ordained, whereby he received power Ministerially to dispense the Mysteries contained in it, and so was made a Presbyter. Thus much breifly concerning Consecration.

There remains nothing else to be explained in the words, I shall therefore now draw forth the sense of them in these two Propositions,

1. *The surest means to strengthen, or the readiest to ruin the Civill Power, is either to establish, or destroy the Worship of God in the right exercise of Religion.*

2. *The next, and most effectuall way to destroy Religion, is to Embase the Teachers and Dispenters of it.*

Of both these in their order.

For the prosecution of the former we are to shew,

1. The truth of the assertion, that it is so.

2. The reason of the assertion, why and whence it is so.

1. For the truth of it, it is abundantly evinced from all Records both of Divine and Prophane History, in which he that runs may read

he ruine of the State in the Deſtruction of the Church, and that not only portended by it as its Signe, but alſo inferred from it, as its Cauſe.

2. For the Reaſon of the point it may be drawne

1. From the Judiciall proceeding of God, the Great King of Kings, and ſupreme Ruler of the Vniverſe; who for his commands is indeed carefull, but for his Worſhip Jealous. And therefore in States notoriouſly irreligious, by a ſecret and irreſiſtable power, countermands their deepeſt Projects, ſplits their Counſells, and ſmites their moſt refined Policies with fruſtration and a curſe: being reſolved that the Kingdomes of the world ſhall fall down before him, either in his Adoration, or their own confuſion.

2. The reaſon of the doctrine may be drawn from the neceſſary dependence of the very Principles of government upon Religion. And this I ſhall purſue more fully. The great Buſineſs of government is to procure obedience, & keep off disobedience: & the great ſprings upon which thoſe two move are Rewards and Puniſhments anſwering the two ruling affections of mans mind, Hope and Fear. For ſince there is a naturall reluctancy between the Judgment and the Appetite, the former reſpecting what is honeſt, the latter what is pleaſing, which two qualifications ſeldome concurre in the ſame thing, and withall mans deſigne in every Action is delight: therefore to render things honeſt alſo practicable, they muſt be firſt repreſented deſireable; which cannot be but by propoſing honeſty cloathed with pleaſure; and ſince it preſents no pleaſure to the ſenſe, it muſt be fetcht from the apprehenſion of a future Reward. For queſtionleſs duty moves not ſo much upon command as promiſe. Now therefore that which propoſes the greateſt, and moſt ſutable rewards to obedience, & the greateſt terrors & puniſhments to Diſobedience, doubtleſs is the moſt likely to enforce one, and prevent the other. But it is Religion that does this, which to happineſſe and miſery joynes Eternity. And theſe, ſuppoſing the Immortality of the ſoul, which Philoſophy indeed conjectures, but only Religion proves, or (which is as good) perſwades; I ſay theſe two things, eternall happineſs & eternall miſery, meeting with a perſwaſion that the ſoul is immortall, are without controverſy of all others, the firſt the moſt deſireable, & the latter the moſt horrible to humane apprehenſion. Were it not for theſe, Civill government were not able to ſtand before the prevailing ſwing of corrupt nature, which would know no Honeſty, but Advantage, no Duty but in Pleaſure, nor any Law, but

its

its own Will. Were not theſe frequently thundred into the underſtandings of men, the Magiſtrate might enact, order and proclaime, Proclamations might be hung upon Walls and Poſts, and there they might hang, ſeen and deſpiſed, more like Malefactors, then Lawes: But when Religion binds the upon the Conſcience, Conſcience will either perſwade or terrify men into their practice. For put the caſe a man knew, and that upon ſure grounds, that he might doe an advantagious murder or Robbery, and not be diſcovered, what humane lawes could hinder him, which he knowes cannot inflict any penalty, where they can make no diſcovery? But Religion aſſures him, that no ſin, though concealed from humane eyes, can either eſcape Gods ſight in this world, or his vengeance in the other. Put the caſe alſo, that men looked upon Death without fear, in which ſenſe it is nothing, or at moſt very little; ceaſing while it is endured, and probably without Pain, for it ſeazes upon the Vitalls and benumms the ſenſes, and where there is no ſenſe, there can be no pain. I ſay, if while a man is acting his will towards ſin, he ſhould alſo thus act his reaſon, to deſpiſe death, where would be the terror of the Magiſtrate, who can neither threaten or inflict any more? Hence an old Malefactor in his Execution, at the Gallowes made no other confeſſion but this; that he had very jocundly paſſed over his life in ſuch courſes, and he that would not, for fifty yeares pleaſure, endure half an hours paine, deſerved to dye a worſe death then himſelf: queſtionleſſe this man was not ignorant before, that there were ſuch things as lawes, aſſizes, and Gallowes, but had he conſidered, and beleived the Terrors of another world, he might probably have found a fairer paſſage out of this. If there was not a Miniſter in every Pariſh, you would quickly find cauſe to encreaſe the number of Conſtables: And if the Churches were not imployed to be places to hear Gods Law, there would be need of them, to be Priſons for the breakers of the Lawes of men. Hence 'tis obſervable that the tribe of *Levi*, had not one Place or Portion together like the reſt of the Tribes: but becauſe it was their office to diſpence Religion, they were diffuſed over all the Tribes, that they might be continually preaching to the reſt, their duty to God, which is the moſt effectuall way, to diſpoſe them to Obedience to man: for he that truely feares God cannot deſpiſe the Magiſtrate. Yea ſo near is the connexion between the Civill ſtate, and the Religious, that heretofore, if you look upon well regulated, civilized, heathen Nations,

tions, you will find the Goverment and the Preisthood united in the same Person: *Anius Rex idem hominum, Phabique Sacerdos. Virg. 3. Æn.* If under the true worship of God. *Melchisedech king of Salem and Priest of the most high God*, Heb. 7. 1. And afterwards *Moses* (whom as we acknowledge a Pious, so Atheists themselves will confess to have been a Wise Prince) he, when he took the Kingly Goverment upon himself, by his own choice, seconded by Divine institution, vested the Preisthood in his brother *Aaron*, both whose concernments were so coupled, that if Nature had not, yet their Religious, nay their civill Interests, would have made them Brothers. And it was once the designe of the Emperour of Germany, *Maximilian* the first, to have joyned the Popedome and the Empire together, and to have got himself choose Pope, and by that meanes derived the Papacy to his succeeding Emperors. Had he effected it, doubtless there would not have been such scuffles between him and the Bishop of *Rome*; the civill Interest of the State would not have been undermined, by an Adverse Interest, mannaged by the specious and potent pretences of of Religion. And to see even amongst us, how these two are united, how the former is upheld by the latter: the Magistrate sometimes cannot doe his own office dexterously, but by acting the Minister; hence it is, that Judges of Assize find it necessary in their Charges, to use patheticall discourses of Conscience, and if it were not for the sway of this, they would often lose the best Evidence in the world against Malefactors, which is Confession: for no man would confess and be Hanged here, but to avoid being Damned hereafter. Thus I have in genetall shewn the utter inability of the Magistrate to attain the End of Goverment, without the Aid of Religion. But it may be here replyed, that many are not at all moved with arguments drawn from hence, or with the happy or miserable state of the Soul after death, & therefore this availes little to procute obedience, and consequently to advance Goverment. I answer by concession: that this is true of Epicures, Atheists, & some pretended Philosophers, who have stifled the Notions of a Deity, and the Souls immortality; but the Unprepossessed on the one hand, and the Well disposed on the other, who both together make much the major part of the world, are very apt to be affected with a due fear of these things: & Religion accomodating it self to the Generality, though not to every particular temper, sufficiently secures Government, in as much as that stands or falls according to the Behaviour of the Multitude. And whatsoever Conscience makes the Generalit-

rality obey, to that Prudence will make the reſt conforme. Wherefore, having proved the dependance of Government upon Religion, I ſhall now demonſtrate, That the ſafety of Covernement depends upon the Truth of Religion. Falſe Religion is in its nature the greateſt bane and deſtruction to Religion in the world. The reaſon is, becauſe whatſoever is Falſe, is alſo Weak. *Ens* and *Verum* in Philoſophy are the ſame: and ſo much as any Religion has of Falſity, it loſes of ſtrength and exiſtence. Falſity it gains Authority onely from Ignorance, and therefore is in danger to be known; for from Being falſe, the next immediate ſtep is to be Known to be ſuch. And what prejudice this would be to the Civill Government, is apparent, if men ſhould be awed into Obedience, and affrighted from ſin by Rewards and Puniſhments, propoſed to them in ſuch a Religion, which afterwards ſhould be detected, and found a meere Falſitie, and Cheat? For if one part be but found to be falſe, it will make the whole ſuſpicious. And men will then not onely caſt off Obedience to the Civill Magiſtrate, but they will doe it with diſdaine and rage, that they have been deceived ſo long, and brought to doe that out of Conſcience which was impoſed upon them out of Deſigne: For though men are often willingly deceived, yet ſtill it muſt be under an Opinion of being inſtructed, though they love the Deception, yet they mortally hate it under that appearance: Therefore it is no wayes ſafe for a Magiſtrate, who is to build his Dominion upon the Fears of men, to build thoſe fears upon a falſe Religion. 'Tis not to be doubted, but the abſurdity of *Jeroboams* Calves, made many *Iſraelites* turne ſubjects to *Rehoboams* Government, that they might be Proſelytes to his Religion. Herein the Weakneſſe of the Turkiſh Religion appears, that it urges Obedience upon the promiſe of ſuch abſurd Rewards, as that after death they ſhould have Palaces, Gardens, Beautifull Women, with all the Luxury that could be: as if thoſe things that were the occaſions, and incentives of ſin in this world, could be the rewards of Holineſſe in the Other. Beſides many other inventions, falſe, and abſurd, that are like ſo many chincks and holes to diſcover the rotteneſſe of the whole Fabrick, when God ſhall be pleaſed to give light to diſcover, and open their reaſons to diſcern them. But you will ſay, What Government more ſure and abſolute than the Turkiſh, and yet what Religion more falſe? Therefore certainly Government may ſtand ſure and ſtrong, be the Religion profeſſed never

ver ſo abſurd. I anſwer, that it may doe ſo indeed by Accident, through the ſtrange peculiar temper, and groſſe ignorance of a people; as we ſee it happens in the Turks, the beſt part of whoſe Policy, ſuppoſing the Abſurdity of their Religion, is this, that they prohibit ſchooles of Learning; for this hinders Knowledge, and Diſputes, which ſuch a Religion would not bear. But ſuppoſe wee, that the Learning of theſe Weſtern Nations were as great there as here, and the Alcoran as common to them as the Bible to us, that they might have free recourſe to ſearch and examine the flawes and follies of it, and withall that they were of as inquiſitive a temper as we: And who knows, but as there are viciſſitudes in the Government, ſo there may happen the ſame alſo in the temper of a Nation. If this ſhould come to paſs, where would be their Religion? And then let every one judge, whether the *Arcana imperii*, and *Religionis* would not fall together. They have begun to totter already; for, *Mahomet*, having promiſed to come, and viſit his Followers, and tranſlate them to Paradiſe after a thouſand years, this being expired, many of the *Perſians* beganne to doubt and ſmell the cheat, till the Mufti or cheif Prieſt told them, that it was a miſtake in the figure, and aſſured them, that upon more diligent ſurvey of the Records, hee found it two thouſand inſtead of one. When this is expired, perhaps they will not be able to renew the Fallacy. I ſay therefore, that though this Government continues firme in the Exerciſe of a falſe Religion, yet this is by accident, through the preſent genius of the people, which may change; but this does not prove, but that the Nature of ſuch a Religion (of which we onely now ſpeak) tends to ſubvert and betray the Civill Power. Hence *Machiavel* himſelf, in his Animadverſions upon *Livy*, makes it appear, that the Weakneſſe of *Italy*, which was once ſo ſtrong, was cauſed by the corrupt practiſes of the Papacy, in depraving, and miſuſing Religion to that purpoſe, which he, though himſelf a Papiſt, ſayes could not have hapned, had the Chriſtian Religion been kept in its firſt, and native ſimplicity. Thus much may ſuffice for the clearing of the firſt Propoſition.

The Inferences from hence are two.

1. If Government depends upon Religion, then this ſhews the peſtilential deſign of thoſe that attempt to disjoyn the Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Intereſts, ſetting the latter wholly out of the Tuition of the former. But 'tis clear that the Fanaticks know no other ſtep to the

the Magiſtracy but through the ruin of the Miniſtry. There is a great Analogy between the Body Natural and Politick; in which the Eccleſiaſtical or Spiritual part, juſtly ſupplyes the part of the ſoul; and the violent ſeparation of this from the other, does as certainly infer death & diſſolution, as the disjunction of the body and the ſoul in the Natural; for when this once departs, it leaves the Body of the Cómonwealth a carcaſs, noyſom, and expoſed to be devoured by Birds of Prey. The Miniſtery will be one day found according to Chriſts word, *the ſalt of the earth*, the only thing that keeps Societies of men from ſtench and corruption. Theſe two Intereſts are of that nature, that 'tis to be feared they cannot be divided, but they will alſo prove oppoſite; and not reſting in a bare diverſity, quickly riſe into a Contrariety: Theſe two are to the State, what the Elements of Fire and Water to the Body, which united compoſe, ſeparated deſtroy it. I am not of the Papiſts Opinion, who would make the Spiritual above the Civill State in power as well as dignity, but rather ſubject it to the Civill; yet thus much I dare affirm, that the Civill, which is ſuperiour, is upheld and kept in being by the Eccleſiaſticall and inferiour; as it is in a Building, where the upper part is ſupported by the lower; the Church reſembling the Foundation, which indeed is the loweſt part, but the moſt conſiderable. The Magiſtracy cannot ſo much protect the Miniſtery, but the Miniſters may doe more in ſerving the Magiſtrate. A taſt of which truth you may take from the Holy War, to which how faſt and eagerly did men goe, when the Prieſts perſwaded them, that whoever dyed in that Expedition was a Martyr? Thoſe that will not be convinced what a help this is to the Magiſtracy, would find how conſiderable it is, if they ſhould chance to claſh, this would certainly eat out the other. For the Magiſtrate cannot urge obedience upon ſuch potent grounds, as the Miniſter, if ſo diſpoſed, can urge diſobedience. As for inſtance, if my Governour ſhould command me to doe a thing, or I muſt dye, or forfeit my Eſtate; and the Miniſter ſteps in, and tells me, that I offend God, and ruine my ſoul, if I obey that command; it's eaſie to ſee a greater force in this perſwaſion from the advantage of its ground. And if Divines once begin *to curſe Meros*, we ſhall ſee that *Levi* can uſe the Sword as well as *Simeon*; and although Miniſters doe not handle, yet they can employ it. This ſhews the imprudence, as well as the danger of the Civil Magiſtrates exaſperating thoſe that can fire mens

conſciences againſt him, and arme his Enemies with Religion: For I have read heretofore of ſome, that having conceived an irreconcileable hatred of the Civil Magiſtrate, prevailed with men ſo farre, that they went to reſiſt him even out of conſcience, and a full perſwaſion and dread upon their ſpirits, that not to doe it were to deſert God, and conſequently to incurre damnation. Now when mens rage is both heightned and ſanctified by Conſcience, the War will be fierce; for what is done out of Conſcience, is done with the utmoſt Activity. And then *Campanella's* Speech to the King of *Spain* will bee found true, *Religio ſemper vicit, præſertim Armata*: Which ſentence deſerves ſeriouſly to be conſidered by all Governours, and timely to be underſtood, leſt it comes to be Felt.

2. If the ſafety of Government is founded upon the truth of Religion, then this ſhews the danger of any thing that may make even the true Religion ſuſpected to be falſe. To be falſe, and to be thought falſe, is all one in reſpect of men, who act not according to Truth, but Apprehenſion. As on the contrary, a falſe Religion, while apprehended true, has the force and efficacy of truth. Now there is nothing more apt to induce men to a ſuſpition of any Religion, than frequent innovation and change: For ſince the object of Religion, God, the ſubject of it, the ſoul of man, and the buſineſſe of it, Truth, is alwayes one and the ſame: Variety and Novelty is a juſt preſumption of Falſity: It argues ſickneſs and diſtemper in the minde, as well as in the body, when a man is continually turning and toſſing from one ſide to the other. The wiſe Romans ever dreaded the leaſt Innovation in Religion: Hence we find the advice of *Mecanas* to *Auguſtus Cæſar* in *Dion Caſſius* in the 52 Book. where hee counſels him to deteſt, and perſecute all Innovators of divine Worſhip, not onely as contemners of the Gods, but as the moſt pernicious diſturbers of the State: For when men venture to make changes in things ſacred, it argues great boldneſs with God, and this naturally imports little belief of him: which if the people once perceive, they will take their Creed alſo, not from the Magiſtrates Law, but his example. Hence in *England*, where Religion has been ſtill *Purifying*, and hereupon almoſt alwaies in the *Fire* and the *Furnace*; Atheiſts, and Irreligious perſons have took no ſmall advantage from our changes. For in King *Edward* the ſixts time, the Divine Worſhip was twice altered in two new Liturgies. In the firſt of Queen *Mary*, the Proteſtant

teſtant Religion was perſecuted with Fire and Faggot, by Law and publick counſel, of the ſame perſons, who had ſo lately eſtabliſhed it. Upon the coming in of Queen *Elizabeth*, Religion was changed again, and within a few daies the publick Council of the Nation made it death for a Prieſt to convert any man to that Religion, which before with ſo much eagerneſs of Zeal had been reſtored. So that it is obſerved by an Author, that in the ſpace of twelve years there were four changes about Religion made in *England*, & that by the publick Councill, and Authority of the Realm, which were more than were made by any Chriſtian ſtate throughout the world in fifteen hundred years before. Hence it is that the Enemies of God take occaſion to blaſpheme, and call our Religion Statiſme: and now adding to the former, thoſe many changes that have hapned ſince, I am afraid we ſhall never be able to claw off that name. Nor, though we may ſatisfie our own conſciences in what we profeſſe, to repell and cleare off the objections of the rational world about us, which not being intereſted in our Changes as we are, will not judge of them as we judge: but debate them by impartiall Reaſon, by the Nature of the thing, the generall Practiſe of the Church; againſt which *New Lights, ſuddain Impulſes of the Spirit, Extraordinary Calls*, will be but weak arguments to prove any thing but the madneſſe of thoſe that uſe them, and that the Church muſt needs wither, being *blaſted* with *Inſpiration*. We ſee therefore how fatall and ridiculous Innovations in the Church are: And indeed when Changes are ſo frequent, it is not properly Religion, but Faſhion. This I think we may build upon as a ſure ground, that where there is continuall Change, there is Uncertainty, and Uncertainty in Religion, is a ſufficient reaſon, if not to deny, yet to doubt of its Truth.

Thus much for the firſt Doctrine, I proceed now to the ſecond, *viz. That the next, and moſt effectuall way to deſtroy Religion, is to Embaſe the Teachers and Diſpencers of it.* In the handling of this I ſhall ſhew,

1. How the Diſpenſers of Religion, the Miniſters of the Word are embaſed or rendred vile.

2. How the Embaſing or Vilifying them is a means to deſtroy Religion.

1. For the firſt of theſe, the Miniſters and Diſpencers of the Word are rendred baſe or vile two waies.

1. By deveſting them of all Temporall Priviledges, and Advantages, as inconſiſtent with their Calling. It is ſtrange ſince the Prieſts Office heretofore was alwaies Splendid, and almoſt Regall, that it is now looked upon as a piece of Religion, to make it low and ſordid. So that the uſe of the word *Miniſter* is brought down to the ſignification of it, *a Servant*: for now to *ſerve* and to *miniſter*, *ſervile* and *miniſteriall*, are termes equivalent. But in the Old Teſtament the ſame word ſignifies a *Prieſt*, and a *Prince*, or *cheif Ruler*: hence, though wee tranſlanſlate it *Prieſt of On*, 41 *Gen.* 45. and *Prieſt of Midian*, 3 *Exod.* 1. and, *as it is with the People ſo with the Prieſt*, 24 *Iſa.* 2. *Junius* and *Tremellius* render all theſe places not by *Sacerdos*, Prieſt, but by *Præſes*, that is, a Prince, or at leaſt a chief Counſellour, or Miniſter of State. And it is ſtrange, that the Name ſhould be the ſame, when the Nature of the thing is ſo exceeding different. The like alſo may be obſerved in other Languages, that the moſt Illuſtrious Titles are derived from things Sacred, and belonging to the Worſhip of God. Σεβαστὸς it was the Title of the Chriſtian *Cæſars*, correſpondent to the Latine *Auguſtus*, and it is derived from the ſame word that σέβασμα, *cultus*, *res ſacra*, or *ſacrificium*. And it is uſuall in our Language to make *Sacred*, an Epithete to *Majeſty*: there was a certaine Royalty in things Sacred. Hence the Apoſtle, who I thinke was no Enemy to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, ſpeaks of a *Royall Prieſthood*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. which ſhews at leaſt, that there is no contradiction or impiety in thoſe tearmes. In Old time, before the placing this office onely in the Line of *Aaron*, the Head of the Family, and the First-borne offered Sacrifice for the reſt, that is, was their Prieſt. And we know that ſuch Rule and Dignity belonged at firſt to the Maſters of Families, that that they had *Jus vitæ & necis*, juriſdiction and power of Life and Death in their own Family, and from hence was derived the Beginning of Kingly Government; a King being onely a Civill Head, or Maſter of a Politick Family, the whole People; ſo that we ſee the ſame was the Foundation of the Royall and Sacerdotall Dignity. As for the Dignity of this Office among the Jews, it is ſo pregnantly ſet forth in Holy Writ, that it is Unqueſtionable. Kings and Prieſts are ſtill mentioned together, in the 2 *Lamen.* 6. *The Lord hath diſpiſed in the indignation of his Anger, the King and the Prieſt*, 5 Hoſea 2, *Hear O Prieſts, and give ear O houſe of the King.* 17 Deut. 12. *And the man that does preſumptuouſly, and will not hearken*

hearken unto the Priest that standeth there to minister before the Lord thy God, or unto the Judge, even that man shall dye. Hence *Paul*, together with a blow, received this Reprehension, *Act.* 5.4. *Revilest thou Gods High Priest?* And *Paul* in the next verse does not defend himselfe, by pleading an extraordinary Motion of the Spirit, or that hee was sent to Reforme the Church, and might therefore lawfully vilifie the Priesthood, and all Sacred Orders; but in the 5. *v.* he makes an excuse, and that from Ignorance, the onely thing that could take away the fault; namely, *that he knew not that he was the High Priest*, and subjoines a reason which further advances the Truth here defended: *For it is written thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people.* To Holy Writ we might adde the Testimony of *Josephus* of next Authority to it in things concerning the Jews, who in sundry places of his History, sets forth the Dignity of the Priests, and in his second Book against *Appion* the Grammarian, he has these words, πάντων τῶν ἀμφισβητουμένων δικασταὶ οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐτάχθησαν, the Priests were constituted Judges of all doubtfull causes. Hence *Justine* also in his 36 Booke has this, *Semper apud Judaeos mos fuit, ut Eosdem Reges & Sacerdotes haberent*: though this is false, that they were alwaies so, yet it argues that they were so frequently, and that the distance between them was not great. To the Jews we may joyne the Egyptians, the first Masters of Learning and Philosophy. *Synesius* in his 57 Epist. having shewen the generall Practise of Antiquity, ὁ παλαὶ χρόνος ἤνεγκε τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἱερέαιτε καὶ κριτὰς, gives an instance in the Jews and Egyptians, who for a many Ages, ὑπὸ τῶν ἱερέων ἐβασιλεύθησαν, had no other Kings but Priests. Next we may take a view of the Practise of the Romans: *Numa Pompilius*, that civilized the fierce *Romans*, is reported in the 1. Book of *Livy*, sometimes to have performed the Priests Office himself. *Tum Sacerdotibus creandis animum adjecit, quamquàm ipse plurima sacra obibat*, but when he made Priests, hee gave them a dignity almost the same with himself. And this honour continued together with the Valour and Prudence of that Nation. For the Success of the Romans did not extirpate their Religion. The Colledge of the Priests being in many things exempted even from the Jurisdiction of the Senate, afterwards the Supream Power. Hence *Juvenal* in his 2. Sat. mentions the Priesthood of *Mars*, as one of the most Honourable places in *Rome*. And *Jul. Caesar* who was chose Priest in his minority, thought it not below him to continue the same Office when

he

he was Created absolute Governour of *Rome* under the name of Perpetuall Dictator. Adde to these the Practise of the *Gaules* mentioned by *Cæsar* in his 6. Book *de Bello Gallico*, where he saies of the *Druides*, who were their Priests, that they did judge *de omnibus ferè controversiis publicis privatisque*. See also *Homer* in the 1. Book of his *Iliads* representing *Chryses* the Priest of *Apollo* with his Golden Scepter, as well as his Golden Censer. But why have I produced all these examples of the Heathens? Is it to make these a ground of our Imitation? No, but to shew, that the giving honour to the Priesthood, was a custome Universall amongst all civilized Nations: And whatsoever is Universall, is also Naturall, as not being founded upon compact, or the particular humours of men, but flowing from the Native results of Reason: and that which is Natural, neither does nor can oppose Religion. But you will say, this concernes not us, who have an expresse Rule and Word revealed. Christ was himself poor and despised, and withall has instituted such a Ministery. To the first part of this Plea I answer; That Christ came to suffer, yet the sufferings and miseries of Christ, does not oblige all Christians to undertake the like. For the second, That the Ministery of Christ was low, and despised by his Institution, I utterly deny. It was so indeed by the malice and persecution of the Heathen Princes, but what does this argue or inferre for a low, dejected Ministery in a flourishing State, which professes to encourage Christianity? But to dash this cavill, read but the practise of Christian Emperours and Kings all along down from the time of *Constantine*, in what respect, what honour and splendour they treated the Ministers, and then let our adversaries produce their puny, pittifull Arguments for the contrary, against the generall, clear, undoubted vogue and current of all Antiquity. As for two or three little Countries about us, the Learned and impartiall will not value their practice; in one of which places the Minister has been seen, for meer want to mend shooes on the Saturday, and been heard to preach on the Sunday. In the other place, stating the severall orders of the Citizens, they place their Ministers after their Apothecaries: that is, the Physician of the Soul after the Drugster of the Body: a fit practice for those, who if they were to ranck Things as well as Persons, would place their Religion after their Trade.

And

And thus much concerning the first way of Debasing the Ministers and Ministery.

2. The second way is by admitting Ignorant, Sordid, Illiterate persons to this Function. This is to give the Royall stamp to a piece of Lead. I confesse, God has no need of any mans Parts, or Learning; but certainly then, he has much lesse need of his Ignorance, and ill Behaviour. It is a sad thing when all other Employments shall empty themselves into the Ministery: When men shall repair to it, not for Preferment, but Refuge; like Malefactors, flying to the Altar onely to save their lives; or like those of *Ely's* Race, 1 *Sam.* 2. 36. that should come crouching, and seek to be put into the Priests Office, that they might eat a piece of Bread. Heretofore there was required splendour of Parentage to recommend any one to the Priesthood, as *Josephus* witnesses in a Treatise that he wrote of his owne Life; where he sayes, to have right to deale in things Sacred, was amongst them accounted an argument of a Noble and Illustrious Descent. God would not accept the Offalls of other Professions. Doubtlesse many rejected Christ, upon this thought, that he was the Carpenters Sonne, who would have embraced him, had they known him to have been the Sonne of *David*. The preferring undeserving persons to this great service, was eminently *Jeroboams* Sin; and how *Jeroboams* practise and offence has been continued amongst us in another guise, is not unknown: For has not Learning unqualified men for Approbation to the Ministery? Has not Parts and Abilities been reputed Enemies to Grace, and Qualities no wayes Ministeriall? Whiles Friends, Faction, Well-meaning, and little Understanding, have been Accomplishments beyond Study and the University; and to falsifie a story of Conversion, beyond pertinent Answers and clear Resolutions to the hardest and most concerning Questions. So that matters have been brought to this passe, that if a man amongst his Sonnes had any blind, or disfigured, he laid him aside for the Ministery, and such an one was presently approved, as having a *mortified Countenance*. In short, it was a fierie Furnace, that often approved Drosse, and rejected Gold. But thanks be to God, those *Spirituall Wickednesses* are now discharged from *their high places*. Hence it was, that many rushed into the Ministery, as being the onely Calling that they could profess, without serving an Apprentiship. Hence also we have had those that could Preach Sermons, but not Defend

ſend them. The reaſon of which is clear, becauſe the Works and Writings of Learned men might be borrowed, but not their Abilities. Had indeed the Old Leviticall Hierarchy ſtill continued, in which it was part of the Miniſterial Office to flay the Sacrifices, to cleanſe the Veſſels, to ſcoure the Fleſh-forks, to ſweep the Temple, and carry the filth and rubbiſh to the Brook *Kidron*. no perſons living had been fitter for the Miniſtery, and to ſerve in this nature at the Altar. But ſince it is made a labour of the mind; as to inform mens judgements, and move their affections, to reſolve difficult places of Scripture, to decide and clear off Controverſies, I cannot ſee how to be a Butcher, Scavinger, or any other ſuch Trade, does at all qualifie, or prepare men for this work. But as unfit as they were, yet to clear a way for ſuch into the Miniſtery, wee have had almoſt all Sermons full of gibes and ſcoffs at Humane Learning. Away with *vain Philoſophy, with the diſputer of this world, and the enticing words of mans wiſdome*, and ſet up the *fooliſhneſſe of Preaching, the ſimplicity of the Goſpel*: Thus Divinity has been brought in upon the ruines of Humanity; by forcing the Words of the Scripture from the ſenſe, and then haling them to the worſt of Drudgeries, to ſet a *Jus Divinum* upon Ignorance and Imperfection, and recommend Naturall Weakneſs for Supernaturall Grace. Hereupon the Ignorant have took heart to venture upon this great Calling, and inſtead of cutting their way to it, according to the uſuall courſe, through the Knowledge of the Tongues, the Study of Philoſophy, School-divinity, the Fathers and Councils, they have taken another, and a ſhorter Cut, and having read perhaps a Treatiſe or two *upon the heart, the bruiſed Reed, the Crums of Comfort, Wollebius in Engliſh*, and ſome ſuch other little Authors, the uſuall Furniture of Old Womens Cloſets, they have ſet forth as accompliſhed Divines, and forthwith they preſent themſelves to the Service; and there has not been wanting *Jeroboams*, as willing to conſecrate, and receive them, as they to offer themſelves. And this has been one of the moſt fatall, and almoſt irrecoverable blows that has been given to the Miniſtery.

And this may ſuffice concerning the ſecond way of Embaſing Gods Miniſters; namely, by entruſting the Miniſtery with raw, unlearned, ill-bred Perſons, ſo that what *Solomon* ſpeaks of a Proverb in the mouth of a Fool, the ſame may be ſaid of the *Miniſtery* veſted in them, that it is like a *Pearle in a ſwines ſnout*.

I proceed now to the ſecond thing propoſed in the Diſcuſſion of this Doctrine, which is to ſhew, how the Embaſing of the Miniſters tends to the deſtruction of Religion.

This it does two wayes.

1. Becauſe it brings them under exceeding ſcorn and contempt; and then let none think Religion it ſelf ſecure: For the Vulgar have not ſuch Logicall heads as to be able to Abſtract; ſuch ſubtile conceptions, as to ſeparate the Man from the Miniſter, or to conſider the ſame perſon under a double capacity, and ſo honour him as a Divine, while they deſpiſe him as a Poor But ſuppoſe they could, yet Actions cannot diſtinguiſh as Conceptions doe, and therefore every Act of Contempt it ſtrikes both, and unavoydably wounds the Miniſtery through the ſides of the Miniſter. And wee muſt know, that the leaſt degree of Contempt weakens Religion, becauſe it is abſolutely contrary to the nature of it, Religion properly conſiſting in a Reverentiall Eſteem of things Sacred. Now that which in any meaſure weakens Religion will at length deſtroy it: For the weakning of a thing is onely a partiall deſtruction of it. Poverty and meaneſſe of condition it expoſes the Wiſeſt to ſcorn; it being naturall for men to place their eſteem, rather upon things Great than Good; and the Poet obſerves that this *Infelix & Paupertas* has nothing in it more intolerable than this, that it renders men Ridiculous. And then how eaſie and naturall it is for Contempt to paſſe from the Perſon to the Office, from him that ſpeaks, to the thing that he ſpeaks of, Experience proves. Counſell being ſeldome valued ſo much for the Truth of the thing, as the Credit of him that gives it. Obſerve an excellent paſſage to this purpoſe in the 9 *Eccl.*14.15. Wee have an account of a little City with few men in it, beſieged by a Great and Potent King, and in the 15. *v.* we read, that *there was found in it a poor Wiſe man, and he by his Wiſdome delivered the City.* A worthy ſervice indeed, and certainly we may expect that ſome honourable Recompence ſhould follow it; a Deliverer of his Country, and that in ſuch diſtreſſe, could not but be advanced: but we finde a contrary event in the next words of the ſame verſe, *Yet none remembred that ſame poor man?* Why? what ſhould be the reaſon? Was he not a man of parts and Wiſdome? and is not Wiſdome honourable? Yes, but *he was poor*: But was he not alſo ſucceſſull as well as wiſe? True; but ſtill *he was poor*: And once grant this, and you cannot keep off that

un voydable sequel in the next verse, *The poor mans wisdome is despised, and his words are not heard.* Wee may believe it upon *Solomons* word, who was Rich, as well as Wise, and therefore knew the force of both: and probably had it not been for his Riches, the Queen of *Sheba* would never have came so farre onely to have heard his Wisdome. Observe her behaviour when she came. Though upon the hearing of *Solomons* Wisdome, and the resolution of her hard Questions she expressed a just admiration, yet when *Solomon* afterward shew her his Palace, his Treasures, and the Temple which hee had built, 1 *King.* 10.c.5.v. it is said, *there was no more spirit in her.* What was the cause of this? certainly the magnificence, the pomp and splendour of such a Structure: it struck her into an Extasy beyond his wise Answers. She esteemed this as much above his Wisdome, as Astonishment is beyond bare Admiration. She admired his Wisdom, but she adored his Magnificence. So apt is the mind, even of Wise persons, to be surprised with the superficies, or circumstance of things, and value, or undervalue Spirituals, according to the manner of their Externall Appearance. When Circumstances faile, the substance seldome long survives; Cloathes are no part of the Body, yet take away cloathes, and the Body will dye. *Livy* observes of *Romulus*, that being to give Laws to his new Romans, he found no better way to procure an esteem and reverence to them, but by first procuring it to himselfe, by splendour of Habit and Retinue, and other signes of Royalty. And the wise *Numa*, his successor took the same course to enforce his Religious Laws, namely, by giving the same Pomp to the Priest who was to dispense them. *Sacerdotem creavit, insignique eum Veste, & Curuli Regiâ sellâ adornavit.* That is, he adorned him with a rich Robe, and a royall Chair of State. And in our Judicatures take away the Trumpet, the Scarlet, the Attendance, and the Lordship, which would be to make Justice Naked, as well as Blind, the Law would lose much of its Terror, and consequently of its Authority. Let the Minister be abject and low, his interest inconsiderable, the Word will suffer for his sake: The Message will still find reception according to the Dignity of the Messenger. Imagine an Ambassadour presenting himselfe in a poor freeze Jerkin, and tattered cloathes, certainly he would have but small Audience, his Embasy would speed rather according to the Meanes of him that brought, than the Majesty of him that sent it.

It

It will fare alike with the Ambaſſadours of Chriſt, the People will give them Audience according to their Preſence. A notable example of which we have in the Behaviour of ſome to *Paul* himſelfe, 1 *Cor.*10.*c.*10.*v.* Hence in the Jewiſh Church it was cautiouſly provided in the Law, that none that was *blind* or *lame*, or had any remarkable defect in his body, was capable of the Prieſtly Office: becauſe theſe things naturally make a perſon contemned, and this preſently reflects upon the Function. This therefore is the firſt way by which the low, deſpiſed condition of the Miniſters, tends to the deſtruction of the Miniſtery and Religion: namely, becauſe it ſubjects their perſons to ſcorn, and conſequently their Calling: and it is not imaginable that men will be brought to Obey what they cannot Eſteem.

2. The ſecond way by which it tends to the ruine of the Miniſtery is, becauſe it diſcourages men of fit and raiſed Abilities from undertaking it. And certaine it is, that as the Calling dignifies the man, ſo the man much more advances his Calling. As a Garment, though it warmes the Body, it has a returne with an advantage, being much more warmed by it. And how often a good cauſe may miſcarry without a wiſe mannager; and the Faith for want of a Defender, is, or at leaſt may be known. 'Tis not the Truth of an Aſſertion, but the Skill of the Diſputant that keeps off a baffle; not the Juſtneſſe of a Cauſe, but the Valour of the Souldiers that muſt winne the Field. When a Learned *Paul* was converted, and undertook the Miniſtery, it ſtopp'd the mouthes of thoſe that ſaid, None but poor, weak Fiſher-men Preached Chriſtianity, and ſo his Learning ſilenced the ſcandall, as well as ſtrengthned the Church. Religion placed in a ſoule of exquiſite Knowledge and Abilities, as in a Caſtle, it finds not only Habitation but Defence. And what a Learned Forrein Divine ſaid of the Engliſh preaching, may be ſaid of all, *Plus eſt in Artifice quàm in Arte.* So much of moment is there in the Profeſſors of any thing, to depreſſe, or raiſe the Profeſſion. What is it that kept the Church of *Rome* ſtrong, athletick, & flouriſhing for ſo many Centuries, but the happy ſucceſſion of the choiceſt Wits engaged to her ſervice by ſuitable preferments? And what ſtrength doe we think would that give to the True Religion, that is able thus to eſtabliſh a Falſe? Religion in a great meaſure ſtands or falls according to the abilities of thoſe that aſſert it: And if, as ſome obſerve, mens Deſires are uſually as large as their Abilities, what courſe have we took to allure

the former, that we might engage the latter to our assistance. But we have tooke all wayes to affright and discourage Schollars from looking towards this sacred calling: For will men lay out their Wit and Judgment, upon that employment, for the undertaking of which, both will be questioned? Would men not long since have spent toylsome dayes and watchfull nights in the laborious quest of knowledge preparative to this work, at length to come and dance attendance for approbation from a *Junctо* of Petty Tyrants, acted by Party and Prejudice, who denyed Fitness from Learning, and Grace from Morality? Will a man exhaust his livelyhood upon Bookes, and his Health, the best part of his life upon Study, to be at length thrust into a poor Village, where he shall have his due precariously, and entreat for his own, and when he has it, live poorly & contemptibly upon it, while the same or lesse labour bestowed upon any other calling, would bring not only Comfort, but Splendor, not only Maintenance but Abundance? 'Tis I confess the duty of Ministers to endure this condition: but neither Religion nor Reason does oblige either them to approve, or others to Choose it. Doubtlesse Parents will not throw away the towardness of a child, and the expence of Education upon a Profession whose labour is encreased, and whose rewards vanished. To condemne promising lively parts to contempt, and penury in a despised calling. What is it elss but the casting of a *Moses* into the mud, or to offer a Son upon the Altar: and instead of a Preist to make him a Sacrifice. Neither let any here reply, that it becomes not a Ministeriall spirit to undertake such a calling for reward? for they must know, that it is one thing to undertake it for a reward, and not to be willing to undertake it, without one: it is one thing to performe good workes only that we may receive the recompence of them in Heaven, & another thing not to be willing to follow Christ and forsake the world if there were no such recompence. But besides, suppose it were the duty of Scholars to chuse this calling in the mid'st of all its discouragements. Yet a prudent governour, who knowes it to be his wisdom as well as his duty, to take the best course to advance Religion, will not consider mens duty, but their practice: not what they ought to doe, but what they use to doe: and therefore draw over the best qualified to this service, by such wayes, as are most apt to perswade and induce men. *Solomon* built his Temple with the Tallest Cedars: and surely when God refused the defective, and the maimed for sacrifice, we cannot thinke that he requires them for the Priesthood. When Learning, Abilities, and what

is

is excellent in the world forsake the Church, we may easily foretell its ruine without the gift of Propheſy. And when ignorance ſucceeds in the place of Learning, weakneſs in the roome of Judgment, we may be ſure, Hereſye and confuſion will quickly come in the roome of Religion. For undoubtedly there is no way ſo effectuall to betray the Truth, as to procure it a weak Defender.

Well: now inſtead of raiſing any particular Uſes from the Point, that has been delivered, let us make a breif Recapitulation of the whole. Government, we ſee depends upon Religion, and Religion upon the Encouragement of thoſe that are to diſpence, and aſſert it. For the further evidence of which truths we need not travell beyond our own Porders: but leave it to every one impartially to Judge, whether from the very firſt day that our Religion was unſettled, and Church Government flung out of Doores, the Civill Government has ever been able to fix upon a ſure foundation. We have been changing even to a Proverb. The indignation of Heaven has been rolling and turning us from one form to another, till at length ſuch a Giddineſs ſeazed upon Government, that it fell into the very dreggs of Sectaryes, that threatned an equall ruin both to the Miniſter and Magiſtrate. And how the State has Symphathized with the Church, is apparent. For have not our Princes, as well as our Preiſts bin of the loweſt of the People? Have not Coblers, Draymen, Mechanicks Governed, as well as reached? Nay have not they by *Preaching* come to Govern? Was ever that of *Solomon* more verified, that Servants have Rid, while Princes, and Nobles have gone on Foot? But God has bin pleaſed by a miracle of mercy to diſſipate this confuſion and Chaos, and to give us ſome openings, ſome dawnings of Liberty and Settlement. But now let not thoſe that are to rebuild our Jeruſalem, thinke that the Temple muſt be built laſt. For if there be ſuch a thing as a God, and as Religion, as, whether men beleive it or no, they will one day find and feele, aſſuredly he will ſtop our Liberty, till we reſtore him his Worſhip. Beſides, it is a ſenceleſs thing in reaſon, to think that one of theſe Intereſts can ſtand without the other, when in the very order of Naturall Cauſes, Government is preſerved by Religion. But to return to *Jeroboam* with whom we firſt began. He laid the foundation of his Government in deſtroying, though doubtleſs he coloured it with the Name of Reforming Gods worſhip: but ſee the iſſue. Conſider him Curſed by God; maintaining his uſurped title, by continuall vexati-

ous

ous Warres againſt the Kings of Judah; ſmote in his poſterity, which was made like the dung upon the face of the Earth, as low and vile as thoſe Preiſts whom he had imployed. Conſider him branded, and made odious to all after ages. And now when his Kingdome, and glorywas at an End;and he and hisPoſterity rotting under ground,and his Name ſtinking above it. Judge what a worthy prize he made in getting of a Kingdome, by deſtroying the Church. Wherefore the ſumm of all is this;to adviſe and deſire thoſe whom it may concern,to conſider *Jeroboams* puniſhment, and then they will have little heart to *Jeroboams* ſinne.

FINIS.